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storing, the majority no longer go to the fields and cattle are no longer herded. True, mealies have to be de-cobbed, but this is work done at home to the strains of wagging tongues and friendly gossip. Many visits are being paid to relatives and friends; people are re-establishing contacts with one another. But if it is a time of leisure, it is also a period of monotonous diet, for relishes are scarce and resort is had to dried relishes, roasted pumpkin pips, and *mahoru* ants, for even blackjacks are scarce before the spring rains. This is the season of the year when European vegetables are welcomed and many people, more particularly Christians, specially cultivate them for these months to be sold as relish. Those, like cabbage and lettuce and tomatoes, which can be cooked in the manner of spinach, are preferred. Where beetroots, radishes, turnips, or carrots are grown, it is the leaves that are sold to be cooked and eaten with porridge. More often than not the roots are thrown away or eaten in desperation by the owner himself. Many people willingly hire their services for a day to a farmer in return for a basket of tomatoes.

Changes have and are taking place in village life, but they have as yet been neither very great nor of a fundamental nature. Even the absence of 37 per cent.[1] of the male population over fifteen years of age in European service on farms and in towns, has been more than offset by the use of the plough. There is a growing spirit of independence among younger people of to-day which makes them impatient of control by their elders, and modern conditions of safety and peace make it possible for people to move away from their parents and establish their own small villages after any quarrel or suspicion of witchcraft.

[1] This figure was obtained by a detailed census of three different areas. Women in this tribe do not leave home to any extent to work for Europeans.

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241 (*Phaseolus aureus*). Several varieties of sugar-cane (sweet sorghums) are planted on the boundaries of fields or between the other crops.

Njugo beans are ancient groundnuts which require a good deal of attention by way of mounding, restrictive taboos and careful pulling up, although they are very welcome as a change of diet. In this respect they [177] resemble peanuts, which were popularized by the Shangana-Tonga not so long ago. These nuts sometimes answer well where other crops have failed; in certain years they may flourish while the cereals wither in the sun. Then you may hear people say, but it is only by way of joking among the Lovedu, that the Shangana-Tonga witches have called the cereals to undergo circumcision (*hu cha*). Some people in the valleys are half-inclined to believe the claims that the Shangana-Tonga make for their witches, because it is undoubtedly uncanny that, when the nuts succeed the cereals fail, and vice versa. But usually the claim is ascribed to the desire of these outcast people to assert their importance—the Lovedu know nothing of inferiority complexes, but they are shrewd judges of human nature.

Sesamum used to be popular in the valleys and is said to be an old crop of the Roka. But peanuts have ousted this wholesome, albeit very troublesome, crop. You will be told that the reason lies in the growing laziness of people; this is a reason given for the neglect of many other old crops, but in truth we have here merely a shift in the application of the available resources. A delightful commentary on some of the values of the society, though we must warn the reader not to judge them from our standpoint, is the name *lenɔnya-vadimo*, 'sesamum of the gods'. It is [182] a wild variety, unsuitable for human consumption, but good enough for the gods. It is not given to the gods, yet it reminds one of the sprouted eleusine merely mixed with water that is offered to the gods with the words, 'This is not water. Truly it is beer.'

261 There are other crops and the variety furnishes a well-balanced diet. But that is not considered to be the virtue of variety. A food is good if it fills. That is why they prefer their hard cakes of porridge to our watery oatmeal. They are inured to that feeling of fullness since the day of their birth, when Grandmother rammed porridge down their throats. But there is comfortable fullness and uncomfortable fullness—that after a good porridge meal and that after eating too much *njugo* bean. The stomach is not insensible to certain distinctions, though they are not our distinctions. Filling is not the only virtue of a food. Some foods relieve the monotony of the round of porridge and blackjacks, and some are [146] tasty dishes or rare delicacies. But no one thinks of the virtues of a balanced diet, for nutritive and protective qualities of foods are not recognized. The old diet, simple though it might be from our point of view, was sufficiently varied to maintain people in good health; but it is not realized that, precisely because it was so simple, even a small change might eliminate essential ingredients. That change has not yet come among the Lovedu, but it is near at hand. Subsidiary crops are becoming less popular. You still see cowpeas, *mung* beans, water melons, even *taroe*, sweet potatoes, and native beans. Yet, on the whole, what is most impressive is the growing reliance upon cereals and pumpkins, and the

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legitimate, for men rely upon their labours and place their faith in the rain, the making of which is the prerogative of the queen.

Failure of one's crops is attributed, not to witchcraft, but in a bad year to the heat of the sun and in normal seasons to indolence or bad soil. In the last resort, however, when every one suffers equally, or when there is a major drought, the calamity is regarded as a punishment by the gods, who 'hold the arms of the queen', or by the queen herself, who is displeased in her heart. Diseases and pests are not magical visitations. Though called 'the witch of the mealies' because it saps their strength, witchweed (*Wormskioldia longipedunculata*) is neither sent by witches nor combated by supernatural means. Destructive insects and parasites, such as stalkborers, weevils, and caterpillars, are regarded, not as being 'sent', but as perfectly natural results of untimely planting or unseasonal rain. Birds, monkeys, rats, and mice are, generally speaking, combated by the practical means at the disposal of man, such as trapping or scaring. Numerous other precautions are taken: one does not plant millet unless one's neighbours do likewise, because when there are many fields, all, not merely one, will be at the mercy of predatory birds; people favour bird-proof corns, though they are harder to thresh; late-maturing crops, whatever their productivity, are discarded in favour of those ripening early, because they cannot be reaped before the cattle start their unrestricted grazing; and a much-favoured peanut, which is also easy to reap, is liable to sprout unless special precautions are taken. In short, the problems of agriculture are tackled in a practical manner.

This does not mean that a practical demonstration of the superiority of new methods will always have the desired effect. Agricultural demonstrators have made very little impression. It is often thought that this is due to the improvidence, lack of ambition, and innate conservatism of the 'savage'. A farmer will tell you that, after years of experience on his farm, his Native labourers go home to practise their primitive, wasteful methods. The trouble is not savage incapacity, but the incongruity of our ways, our technology, and our ideals with theirs. The demonstrator is like a teacher speaking a foreign language and working with material and concepts which do not exist in the society. He often is wholly ignorant of the background of belief. His education makes him unduly scornful of savage superstitions, instead of using them to advantage. In agriculture, among the Lovedu, there is one practice we might call superstition. It is *hu upa*, a method of safeguarding crops with medicine against the depredations of birds and monkeys. It is quite harmless, absorbs little of the time or energy of the few children who scatter the medicine, and does not preclude the use of other, more empirical methods. There is no need to waste eloquence upon eradicating a practice which strengthens the interest of the children in agriculture, causes no slackening in their scaring activities from the platforms erected in the fields, and, in the last resort, is an effective psychological device; for it equalizes the struggle of man against nature and maintains at the requisite intensity the confidence which enables him to strive hopefully against his difficulties.

Practical knowledge is undoubtedly the weapon with which demonstrators should combat progressive degeneration in agriculture; but it is

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241 not practical knowledge applied from our point of view; it must be from
● 177 their point of view. Instruction must be articulated with their practices and techniques; it must take into account their arrangements and their rhythm of life. The knowledge imparted must be applicable to their conditions and be linked with the instruments at their disposal. For the dietician to extol the virtues of a new crop, for the doctor to show that bacteria more readily enter where resistance is lowered by deficiencies in food, even for the agricultural demonstrator using his superior implements to demonstrate the practicability of the crop—all this is very nearly fruitless. These things will have their value when they can be fitted into the Native's world of thought and technology. In the meanwhile, the execution of our plans, sound though they be in theory, is merely causing irritation and resistance.

241 All the old Lovedu cultivation was on the hills or along their slopes and,
476 generally speaking, close relatives, not necessarily relatives through
178 males, had all or some of their fields in large blocks (*demo*). Unlike the Tswana custom, these blocks stood in no relation to the social organization; the land was not pointed out by the chief and its size was not predetermined, but depended upon the energy of the individual cultivators. The *demo* was a matter of convenience and utility: the concentration facilitated co-operation in clearing the fields, economized the labour necessary for protecting the gardens, and made mutual assistance in hoeing and weeding much easier. No doubt the arrangements also mobilized incentives and added to the joys of life. There is to-day nothing left of these blocks. The old ones have inevitably fallen into the hands of more and more scattered people and no new ones can be created because large blocks of land are no longer available. The tendency towards dispersal and fragmentation was still further emphasized when Shangana-Tonga cultivation proved the fertility of the valleys. To-day a man must take land where he can find it, and though the Lovedu still live on the hills, they have their lands scattered all over the country. Indeed, since it is easier to plough on level ground, the hills are liable to be neglected, though wisdom dictates that it is best to have fields in two different environments. The result is that a man's fields are widely separated, sometimes being as far as ten miles apart.

241 The old division of labour in agriculture between the sexes was not
462 uneven; both men and women hoed, weeded, and reaped. Only men cleared the forest, but against that only women cultivated certain crops, such as groundnuts. The old pattern is still more or less maintained, at least in principle. But cultivation by the plough has changed matters. Men look upon hoeing as the work of women, although the old ideal so much survives that they despise the Shangana-Tonga because their menfolk neither hoed nor weeded in the past. To-day hoeing and weeding among the Lovedu fall largely upon the women, and ploughing almost exclusively upon the men. This is not a fair division of labour; it might be fairer if the other activities of men, such as hunting and public life, had not become greatly attenuated. For the women are always busy, and their work is more monotonous than that of the men, who, despite the labour migration to the towns, have much more leisure than women.

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with an emotion which, though wholly unlike our humanitarian attitude, finds expression in exaggerated praises. These can be understood only in relation to their immense importance in the social organization.

Lovedu cattle are a blend, it is said, of four different strains: the large, humped Lovedu with backward-curving horns, the small, sturdy long-horned Rhodesian, the small Swazi with incurving horns, and the recent rather nondescript European breeds. In the present environment the mixture has led to inferior scrub cattle, resistent to tick-borne diseases and hardened by the stony hills. There are more cattle to-day than formerly and the distribution is far more equal, but no one believes that dipping has contributed to this result; on the contrary, dipping is regarded as a device to keep down their numbers, to subject the Native to irritating interference, behind which there are sinister motives. Recent attempts by the Administration to improve the breed by introducing thoroughbred Afrikander bulls failed because of these suspicions; the bulls were neglected and no camp was provided for them, and eventually they had to be removed. Cattle of individual owners are listed on so-called cattle lists, which primarily serve as a check upon the efficiency of the dipping; but the lists do not reflect real ownership, for they contain the cattle in a man's kraal, most of which may be merely in his care (*hu fisa*). These lists have considerably altered the incidents of the *hu fisa* contract and other aspects of Native life: they are often illegitimately used as evidence of ownership; orders of Native courts involving payments of cattle are sometimes nullified by the refusal of the owner of the list to authorize the transfer of cattle from his list to that of another; dipping and grazing fees imposed in some parts induce men, on the one hand, to distribute their cattle among different owners so as to keep down the number on any single list and, on the other, to make a charge, unauthorized by custom, for caring for the cattle of others. In short, European intervention has produced as serious changes in pastoral as in agricultural activities. Yet fundamentally the changes have left untouched the real significance and role of cattle in the society.

Cattle are not subject to as many taboos as elsewhere in Southern Africa. Women do not usually herd cattle, but the reason given is that not long ago the dangers from raids and wild animals necessitated herding by armed men; it was regarded as a purely practical measure. Girls or women may herd when the boys are in the circumcision school, and sometimes to-day young girls who have no brothers are seen looking after the cattle. What women may do or may not do varies almost from one kraal to another. Sometimes women of any age may go into the kraals; sometimes the doctor has protected the kraal in such a way that certain classes of women (not necessarily young women) are excluded. There is a fairly uniform fear that the blood of women or a woman who has had an abortion might cause the cattle harm. But the measures to combat these dangers vary very considerably. Kraals are doctored rather than cattle; and they are protected against various dangers, one of them being the danger of women. But elaborate magical practices, elsewhere associated with increasing the fertility of the cattle or safeguarding them

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231 against misfortune and disease, are not necessary when a new kraal is
784 built or when the medicated pegs are hammered around the fence as a
789 protection against witches. Some confine their doctoring to the kraals; others, in addition, give the cattle medicine. Bulls are never magically rendered more virile, nor are cows made more attractive by such means. There are to-day hardly any special cattle doctors, and very few cattle diseases are known or subjected to treatment. This is not the result of the breakdown of the cattle cult; it is evidence of the weakness of the cult among the Lovedu. If one were to detail all the magical practices that are to be found, the volume of which would be doubly formidable owing to their diversity, an overwhelming impression might be given; but in true perspective, regarding them against the total background they are almost too insignificant to be noticed.

231 Far more important from every point of view is the adjustment that
232 Natives are making to modern conditions. On this point we can offer
● 177 merely a few very general suggestions. Foremost is the problem of better co-operation between the Natives and the Administration. The objections to dipping are a symptom of misunderstanding one another's point of view. The Natives regard the restrictions as a punitive and arbitrary imposition. It is useless merely to urge that, by destroying the ticks that cause cattle diseases, dipping promotes both the increase and the welfare of the cattle. No one believes what is regarded as demonstrably false. Any one can see that cattle often die when they come back from the dip; that the rate of calving has decreased, that there are now no milch cows, that stock have degenerated, and so on. These evils are attributed to dipping, not to the hard driving to the dip, poor grazing, and inadequate care. What is more, it is believed that Europeans do not dip and that tribes that are sufficiently cunning escape the dipping regulations. Not a few advance the theory that dipping is a punishment for attachment to and preservation of old customs—surely an ironical comment upon the execution of a policy that aims at segregation and development on the lines of racial genius. The psychological aspects of these problems are no less important than their other aspects; and they are far more difficult and require delicate handling. It is easy to envisage the immediate effects, for instance, of limitation of stock, such as the starvation that will result from insufficient cultivation and the overburdening of the women with agricultural work; but when it is realized that the cattle are barely sufficient to maintain the *munyualo* exchanges upon which the social organization rests, one cannot venture to predict what the ultimate effect of limitation will be.

231 Goats are the animals *par excellence* of ritual and religious importance.
431 They also feature prominently in exchanges which promote social inter-relations, such as marriage exchanges and the goodwill gifts between relatives-in-law. Second only to beer in re-establishing relations that have become strained, they are used very largely in the procedure of reconciliation, of righting wrongs by begging pardon, and in the payment of judgement debts. When a distinguished guest visits you, you honour him by killing a goat for him; when you bring beer to your *nafuhulu*, the people to whom the daughters of your lineage are married, or even to a

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561 are not at all anxious that their children should be taught craftsmanship in the mission schools.

887 In contrast to our customs, education never ends. As the physiological capacities vary, so new activities are undertaken. The culture always provides a place for the aptitudes of every stage of life, and neither men nor women become redundant in their old age, unless, indeed, they are utterly decrepit. With their physical decline, the culture provides new avenues and interests, to which they are continuously adjusting themselves. They suffer no sense of frustration, because their adjustments are dynamic. With us old age may be tragic: among women, the menopause may precipitate a crisis; among men, retiring from work often causes loss of interest in life and mental decay. But old Lovedu men and women always have something more to learn and to do. Women are not perturbed about external signs of age and complacently accept the end of their childbearing years, for these years bring increased influence, a fuller life, and greater rewards. If physical disability excludes old men from active political life, they receive ample compensation in reduced responsibilities and added prestige. There is no sense of impotence that upsets their balance. Instead, the changing sphere of their roles and their interests both keeps them stable and makes them precious to the society. The distress of old age among us is seldom seen, for rewards always stimulate the new adjustments that have to be made. Utter decrepitude is, however, a tragedy, fortunately ended by the neglect that we may regard as pitiless, but which realistically eliminates those who cannot attain even the mediocre level of achievement that the society calls for. He who cannot attain this level cannot make simple adjustments. But he who can still use his faculties in his old age may become a doctor of note, or a recognized authority on tribal legends or history. Finally, the psychological effect of beliefs attaching to the very old is to provide them with new incentives and renewed opportunities. The widespread suspicion that they have personal contacts with the world of darkness enhances their power, while their elevation, in anticipation, to godhead, for they are already so near death that they may be referred to as gods (*nodimo*), invests their dignity and their wishes with a supernatural halo.

871 Beside this all-pervasive system of tribal education, the modern school,
797 with its three R's, is as yet of small importance. It reaches, and only in
● 177 an attenuated form, no more than 3 to 5 per cent. of the children. Its methods are foreign, divorced from life; its teachers are immature, handicapped by inadequate equipment and by being uprooted from the soil of tribal culture. Yet the modern school is the force of the future. Education is passionately desired by the young, and the old would welcome it if they did not feel that it was subversive. There is no compulsion upon a scholar to become a Christian; but the belief persists that education and Christianity are inseparable. It is a belief that raises an awkward dilemma: must the school, which at the same time is the gateway to Christianity, give up its task of breaking down, or can it compromise with superstition? Can it work from within, integrated into the culture, without defeating its purpose? The answer cannot be given here. The task of the school and the Church is no less prodigious and delicate than

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the difficulties of the young boy or girl are great and the conflicts within him irreconcilable. He is ragged by other scholars unless he also attends church; he is discouraged from playing with his friends, the pagans who do not attend school; he is deprived of the joys of dancing and drumming. The *khobo* and play-housekeeping are taboo to him. Tensions and maladjustments arise: Christian girls disgrace themselves and outrage Christian sentiment by having more illegitimate children than pagans; people laugh when they see Christian men attending beer-drinks and scornfully remark upon the bad manners of pretentious school-children.

The school, nevertheless, has made a notable contribution. Its teachings have some immediate life-adjustment value. Reading and writing, a training for a profession, a knowledge of English or Afrikaans are valuable aids in the economic struggle. But more important in the modern world is the long-run adjustment value of the outlook engendered in the schools. In the culture-contact situation, with the scales weighted in favour of a capacity to accommodate oneself to European thought and methods, the training of the school prepares the way to some measure of co-operation with agricultural demonstrators, European health officers, and those who are concerned with the reclamation of the reserves. The idea of progress takes root and, though it is a perverted idea, it provides new incentives and counteracts the sense of frustration before the march of an overwhelming force, the force of Western culture.

Unfortunately, the gains are counterbalanced by the losses. It may be that the losses are temporary, because, on the one hand, they are losses from the point of view of the old culture and, on the other, in a period of transition there must inevitably be tensions and conflicts. Men are guided by vast systems of values and sentiments, built up laboriously by centuries of tradition; these cannot be replaced by a new set of standards inculcated by a single institution, such as the modern school, especially when that institution uses ineffective techniques and is external to the main trends of the culture. Some of the losses are not inevitable: it is not the school as such which disables educated young men from accepting manual labour and housework. It might even be possible to avoid the loss of that valuable body of veldlore which the herdboys learn during the years of herding. Boys and girls need the three R's; they need to understand and trust the ways of the white man; but they also need the knowledge and the standards that make life worth while in the society of which they are part. It is the task of the school to take account, not of one, but of all these needs.

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643 171 Sofala had formerly to take poison when disaster or a natural defect fell upon them. Among the Lovedu, tradition decrees that the queen shall have no physical defect and must poison herself, not when she is old, but at the end of the fourth initiation (*vudiga*) of her reign. The emergence of physical imperfections and the holding of the fourth *vudiga* cannot both determine the date of suicide. In fact, no reign has been cut short because of bodily defects, though the conception of the relation survives. The queen is believed to be immune from disease and it is thought that her first will be her last illness; it is even said that Mujaji III's elder uterine brother was excluded from the throne because of his weak ankles. At the same time, not kings, but queens are wanted, there are no tests of physical fitness as are recorded for tribes in the north, and in the legends [173] of the Lovedu and of tribes which, following the Lovedu, have ritual suicide, physical defects do not figure as a theme. In this complex, heirs to the throne have been disqualified or chiefs have been deposed because of inability to make rain, disobedience to their sovereign, or adultery with his wives. Among the Mamaila, a branch of the Lovedu, one chief is said to have become a cripple because he forced open the door which magically yields to the touch of the true heir, and the Nemesis that overtook him is attributed to his sin, not to his defect. Impotence disqualifies in the north, but Mujaji II was barren and, in the pattern as adopted in some tribes, such as the Khaha of Maake, barrenness of the queen is expected; for, as the queen may have no official husband, it is a virtue to have no children. That conception is not accepted by the Lovedu, for Mujaji II's barrenness was a source of sadness and strife and every effort was made to cure her. Physical fitness is an aspect of the perfection and divinity of the queen, but it has no practical relation to the right of succession.

643 778 171 177 The relation between the length of a reign and the initiations is far more obscure. In many tribes where ritual suicide is enjoined (Thavina, Khaha, Venda), the number of 'schools' is said to be seven. The 'schools' are there held more frequently, and possibly there is some connexion with the number of sacred drums (*digoma*), for the Khaha have seven and the Lovedu four. The chief's life, as we have seen, is intimately bound up with the drums; both drums and 'schools' are great *dogoma*, objects or activities in which power is concentrated. Power is also concentrated in *dithugula*, a category of objects chiefly associated with the gods. The distinction is not that between magic and religion; the *digoma* and *dithugula* appear to belong to different cultural complexes. The one was characterized, we may suppose, by 'schools', drums, and cults linked up with national calendric observances, dramatization of the crises in life, and the sanctity and power of the chief; the other, by sacred beads, shrines, reincarnation of ancestors in dedicated animals, and ritual suicide of the chief. In the process of merging, the great *digoma* were, we suggest, grafted on to the royal institutions and brought into relation with the life as well as the death of the chief. This is little more than speculation, for it is difficult to isolate the oldest cultural substrata and their distinctive patterns.

The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly,

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and dirt for the vital ingredient of the rain medicine, and after a while close relatives secretly dig a grave at Maulwi, the place where to-day the sacred drums are also kept. The grave is deep, for the queen must stand upright, 'taking care' of her country, and facing to the north, whence her ancestors came. The body is wrapped in a greenish-black cloth, a portion still of what was brought from the north, and over it is wound the skin of an ox. The hearse proceeds from the village secretly at night, and, as the great must rest, the bearers stop every few yards. Sacred beads, a calabash of water, a firebrand, the grains upon which people live and (in the old days) the body of a man, the 'mat' of the chief, are interred with the queen. The calabash and firebrand, used also to expel a usurper, provide the essentials for the 'journey' to be undertaken. A slab of stone covers the mouth of the grave and facilitates the re-opening whenever rain medicine (*mufugo*) is to be poured into it. The grave is not all at once filled up with soil; it is guarded against enemies, who might destroy the country with the medicine the body provides; and it is said that a wooden structure, on which the watchers sleep, is built over the grave. The soil at last reaches the neck, but the head must be left uncovered for perhaps six months, until it has completely decomposed.

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A year later the district heads are assembled at the capital, the death is announced and the drum beaten, and people shave their heads. It is said that foreigners entered the country at the peril of life and belongings. When the hair has grown and the mourning period ends, all fires in the country are put out. This same fire-rite figures, as far as a district is concerned, at the installation of its head, and as far as the whole country is concerned, when all-pervasive impediments to rain are removed. It essentially consists—we have described it briefly in Chapter XV—of putting out fires with medicine (*mufugo*) by boys who receive the medicine at the capital, and of a chain of payments, by the women to the married men for the firebrand obtained from the *khoro* to re-light their fires, by the men to the boys for their services in the rite, and by the boys to the official keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital. Two distinctive patterns are explicit in this rite: fire in its aspect of a valuable commodity and as almost the prerogative of the chief, to whom his subjects must pay a royal 'fire tax'; and fire in its aspect of giving out deleterious 'heat', which must be counteracted by 'cooling' with *mufugo* (*hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with 'cooling' medicine).

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Fire also belongs to a third pattern which links it up with crises or great changes, ritualizes its value, and uses it to extinguish an evil or to purify a state of defilement. In their present cultural connotation among the Lovedu, these three patterns are implicit in the nature of fire, but they do not always merge in ritual situations, and, as far as the evidence of the cultures of the Northern Transvaal go, they belong to different cultural configurations. This evidence seems to indicate that the 'royal tax', through which authority is asserted and acknowledged, came from the Karanga, that the association with purification and 'transitions' was borrowed from the old Sotho, and that the conception of 'heat' as the antithesis of health of body and well-being of the country, was contributed by a wider and less easily determinable culture substratum. The

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significance of the fire rite at the accession of a queen can be understood only in the context of the three patterns as they have been integrated into Lovedu culture and become merged in the rite.

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Firstly, fire figures in the borrowed 'transition' rites, but not in the girls' puberty rite (*khɔba*). Midway in the sacred fire of the boys' circumcision (*vudiga*) is its central shrine at the place where the chief initiate (*washe*) sits. In the sanctum of the Bird of the *vyali* there is an undying fire. The end of these 'schools' is spoken of as 'a burning down' (*hu swa*): the fire destroys all the distinctive things of the 'school', the lodge, the tables, the tiniest bits of grass that fell from the dancing performers, and, as the lodge burns, the initiates, turning their backs upon it, may not look round and are irrevocably severed from their past. Again, when 'the country is not right' and has to be re-established or purified of its pollution with 'cooling' medicine (*mufugo*), a transition is implied, for it is said, 'The fires are put out to usher in a new year'. The same conception reappears when *mufugo* is used before the accession of a new queen.

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Secondly, the firebrand, as the symbol of authority, figures in the warrant (*khiso*, i.e. firebrand) given by the queen which authorizes district heads to hold 'schools'. This warrant of authority is most strikingly evident in the firebrand and calabash handed to a disaffected noble or would-be usurper as an intimation that he is expelled from the country. It has merged with the *mufugo* rite enacted to render the earth receptive to the power of rain magic or to herald the accession of a queen; and here it takes the form of a 'royal tax' vicariously exacted through the women, their husbands, the boys sprinkling the medicine, and the keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital.

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Thirdly, 'beating out' of fires with 'cooling' medicine belongs to a complex of rites for counteracting the harmful effects of 'heat', a conception explained in Chapter XII. 'Heat' not only arises from the contamination of death, but is the concomitant of disease, weakens the charms (*dithugula*), impedes rain, and defiles the earth. In all these cases it is combated with 'cooling' medicine, as we describe elsewhere. In addition, the *gɔma* drums are prevented from losing their concentrated power by the 'cool' river stones in them, witches are thwarted by protective charms (*diphoba*) in which the products of the sea are the most powerful elements, and the 'heat' of the ancestors' anger is 'cooled' with *mufugo*. The death of a queen 'dries up' or 'heats' the whole country, which has to be cooled as a preparation for the new ruler.

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Thus in the fire rite at a queen's accession, the culture is handling complicated and all-important conceptions. The pervasive evil corrupting the country must be neutralized; the relationship of ruler and ruled, superior and inferior, must be visibly reasserted; and there must be enacted a momentous new start marking the inception of a new destiny and preparing the universe for the reception of the next rain-maker. The fire rite on this occasion symbolizes a mighty purification and 'transition', epitomizes the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen, and inaugurates a cosmic order in which the magic of a new rain-maker may be suspiciously manifested. That, in the Lovedu cultural context, is the meaning of the fire rite.

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695 683 754 because it involves too great publicity and danger of European intervention, though they say, perhaps by way of rationalization, that the doctor of the ordeal could manipulate the test. As this procedure is merely of theoretical interest, we need refer only to its salient features.

The victim or his relative privately consulted a bone-throwing doctor, whose verdict he had confirmed by perhaps two or more other doctors before he or an intermediary on his behalf made a public accusation. The ordeal or test took place at the capital and was public. Lineal relatives of accuser and accused or, according to some, two strong men chosen by them, were given an intoxicating drink by the official 'doctor of the ordeal', the spectators watching to ensure that equal quantities were administered. Those who had drunk were put in the sun and he who began moving about or became dizzy, drunken, or incoherent was in the wrong. The witch was usually executed at once, at the orders of the queen, being strangled at the river; but if she was a woman, one of the executioners first had sexual intercourse with her; and the body, tied to a weight, was sunk into the water to be eaten by animals. But the witch was sometimes delivered to the victim to undo his evil work (*hu mu lɔulla*), and if the illness left the victim the witch was released. Sometimes, also, suspected witches were beaten, tied up (nowadays, as we have seen, handcuffed and submitted to ridicule and abuse), and left without food or tortured with velvet stinging-beans until they confessed; this was sometimes done privately, and it was possible also to kill them without the public ordeal, the killing being reported to the queen; but usually they were merely banished.

683 754 The property of a witch who was killed was not all confiscated, but *baza*, consisting chiefly of his cattle, was taken by the queen for division between herself and her nobles. No one else could appropriate *baza*; even the village head, if he did so, was regarded as a thief. The witch's gardens reverted to the district head, the crops were taken, not by the queen, because she could not eat the 'dirt of the witch', but by the messengers of the queen, for they were so busy in her service that they could hardly cultivate their fields. Residents in the district surreptitiously during the night took the witch's crops, but it was regarded as disgraceful to do so openly during the day. The wife of a witch was taken by a classificatory brother, and his children were adopted by the queen, who received *munyɔalo* when she married the girls to her nobles (in more recent times, to commoners, because the girls often deserted). In the days of the kings, all the relatives, or, as some say, only those on the mother's side—the mother's uterine brothers and sisters especially—were killed. The queens had only a uterine brother or sister killed if they failed to leave the country. The witch, unlike a murderer, could not find sanctuary in the forest of Daja; and only a witch's, not a murderer's, property was *baza*—confiscable property.

787 695 [177] Since the beginning of this century submission of issues to ordeal has been replaced by their submission to the smelling-out diviner (*mugɔme*). The institution of the *mugɔme* has been borrowed from the Shangana-Tonga and its whole complicated legal procedure is still in a state of flux, adjustments being constantly made especially to avoid European intervention.

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end of the horn being closed by a piece of beeswax, in which a small hole can be made when the mouth is applied for suction. Vein-cutting, however, requires greater skill, though even this operation is outside the province of the diviner. A vein on the back of the hand or on the instep is lifted with an awl and cut with a piece of iron or a razor blade. When enough blood has run out, cold water is applied and the cut held tightly with the fingers to stop the bleeding. This is a common treatment for illness believed to be due to unwanted blood in the body.

Scarification, except in the mutual inoculation and blood mixing of husband and wife prior to their first sexual intercourse after marriage and after the death or miscarriage of a child, is a treatment that is directed less at the evils of blood than towards a strengthening of the body or part of the body by the insertion of medicine. It is used in curing headache, for sprains and broken limbs, and for all 'strengthenings', such as that prior to taking a child out of the hut for the first time or the 'fixing' of one's body against witches. For general strengthenings, incisions are made on all the joints and on other parts of the body, such as head and neck depression, which are considered important. Scarification is, with the drinking of medicine or eating of powders, quite the most common form of medical treatment; it is used in the home as much as by diviners and forms part of many other treatments, such as the vapour bath. By far the most interesting form of scarification is, however, '*hu thɛmɛla*' (vaccination) against smallpox in which matter from the pustules of affected persons, mixed with other medicines, is inoculated to introduce the disease in a mild form. It is done on the dorsal side of the wrist or on the forehead, a pattern which supports the claim that it was known prior to the advent of the European; moreover, the ingredients of the serum used by Europeans are not known. Possibly the treatment was borrowed from Arabs, who were the first to study smallpox and measles. The old method was still widely practised in the 1938 smallpox epidemic, for, though it was realized that it 'called' the disease instead of curing it, people noted that, despite European vaccination, there was still much illness.

Steaming and the vapour bath also form part of the practical elements in Lovedu medicine. There are various forms of steaming and smoking, all of which go by the same term. To 'loosen' a cough, chips of a certain root may be placed in a pipe with a live coal and smoked; to purify a person after a death, chips are charred on a potsherd and the smoke inhaled through a reed; before being taken out of the hut, a new-born child is held naked in the smoke of burning chips or root and bark; boils and other swellings are brought to a head by the application of the steam of boiling roots. To cure fever or general weakness of the body after an illness and for purification of husband and wife after the death of a child the procedure is more complicated. Red-hot stones are put into a large pot of medicated water and when it bubbles and boils the patient, naked except for a cloth passed between the legs, is covered with a blanket and steamed. After much spluttering and shouting, he is taken out, sprinkled or washed down with cold water and then either scarified on the joints or subjected to *hu hata*—that is, a river stone is pressed on the joints and is later taken back to the river. This treatment is considered too drastic

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immediate and usually not consciously phrased, yet in the total complex of the culture all things are interconnected, albeit in ways that are not easy to see clearly. The gods help good and bad men alike, they send illness whether one is careful or neglectful of the observances due to them, and the after-life is the same for all. But we should be careful not to deduce too much from this. The position of a sister and her privileges are sanctioned by the gods, as is also the respect due to old people. In general the gods are not upholders of custom, yet on one occasion in 1937 two *mwidajani* cried all day in the bush at Maulwi because some women had broken the taboo against cutting wood there. The chief concern of the gods appears to be to look after their own interests. They complain when they dislike the manner of their burial, but they are undisturbed when twins are not buried in wet soil, even though this has a disastrous effect on the whole country. If they were disturbed about custom in general, instead of things directly affecting them, they would complain of many disturbing changes in these days of culture contact; instead, one only finds that possessing spirits dislike European things and that at offerings European utensils are generally not used.

Another outstanding characteristic is the almost entire absence of any speculative element. The Lovedu are not concerned with such things as the life hereafter and the mode of life of the gods; theirs is essentially a practical religion in which rites are of far greater importance than attitude of mind, action than belief. Its rites are directed to practical ends, such as recovery from illness and the procuring of rain. In vain does one inquire into the meaning or reason of a rite, for the reply always is, 'The bones tell us to do these things,' and the practical end is phrased as determined by the bones. There are considerable differences from one family to another in the conduct of religious rites and the nature of shrines and, since religion is primarily a family concern, few people know what their neighbours do. Not uncommonly one finds a practice said to be impossible by some people accepted as normal by their neighbours.

Lovedu religion is not distinct from magic. The very terminology of the two is identical: *thugula* is a shrine, dedicated animal, or a sacred object once in the possession of the ancestors, but it is also any charm of bone or herbs concocted by a doctor. *Diphaba* are used in shrines or offerings to make the ancestors forget, as well as to ward off witches from the village. *Hu rerelela* means both to pray and to utter a spell. *Hu phasa* is used both to approach the gods and with medicines when sending back disease to a witch; one may also *phasa* on the charms in the village gate on the arrival of beer in order that more may come to the village. In a sacrifice for rain, the magical rites are of as great importance as the purely religious; and *hu phasa* in case of illness is thought to have a compelling force. It cannot fail; if it does, there must be some other cause, for an ancestor can never refuse to be placated by the *phasa* rite.

The merging of religion with magic and medicine is everywhere evident, but nowhere is it more prominent than in the cult of possession. This cult is not indigenous; it came with the Thovhb and, since its first reception some thirty years ago, has gained considerable popularity.

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771 The form in which it is found is different from that among Shangana-
794 Tonga and lent itself to ready incorporation into Lovedu religion.
177 Among Shangana-Tonga, the possessing spirit is regarded as a foreign spirit from some outside tribe; among the Lovedu it is an ancestor who may, like any ancestor, demand the usual shrine or dedicated animal. The cult is not accepted by all and the royal family deprecate it as foreign and as detracting from their prestige. Its noisiness and showiness, though incongruous with the traditional reserve and lack of display, makes a popular appeal in these more insecure days.

794 A spirit entering a person causes illness and the first object of the cult
753 is directed at curing the illness, so that initiation is regarded as therapeutic. Long-continued illness of a patient, which will yield to no curative treatment, will be diagnosed as due to an ancestral spirit 'pressing him down', because it wants to manifest itself in him. The symptoms are never very definite: Mashishimali was 'ill all over the body' and suffered from swollen legs which five different doctors had tried unsuccessfully to cure; Mamolatela was weak and ailing after the birth of her first child. The symptoms are neither violent, like the running amuck which accompanies *ukuthwasa* among the Nguni, nor of a specifically nervous nature.
[828] Epilepsy, which is common, bears no relation to possession, and any peculiar behaviour is more liable to be attributed to witchcraft than to the spirits. It is believed that a possessed person after death likes in turn to manifest itself in some descendant and there is a tendency for possession to run in families. In one family three sisters and their mother were all possessed. Sometimes, especially where others in the family are possessed, a person does not even get ill; he just becomes possessed when people are singing or dancing in the manner of the cult. Contact with certain localities or people associated with possession is often sufficient. Thus it is said that, should one be among the Sekhwasha in Portuguese East Africa, who become possessed in a manner different from the Lovedu, one risks becoming possessed by merely picking up something dropped by a member of that tribe or eating the fruit of the fig, *mudomma* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), or *munɓɛbɛbɛ* (*Cassia petersiana*).

794 Once it is known that a person is being 'pressed down' by some spirit
755 wishing to manifest itself, a *lelɔpɔ* doctor, himself possessed and skilled in dealing with the possessed, is called to cure the patient. This is done, not by exorcism, but by rites designed to enable the spirit to come and make known its wishes along legitimate channels, known in the cult. For the spirits that possess people are not evil spirits to be expelled; they are the ancestors whom one worships, and their desire occasionally to manifest themselves through some living relative is comparable to that impulse towards life that makes them desire shrines, dedicated animals, and the perpetuation of their names in their descendants. The method by which a spirit is enabled to 'come out' and disclose its identity and the possessed person to become the host (*ledala*) of the spirit without being ill consists largely of dancing; and on all subsequent occasions when the
794 spirits manifest themselves they signify their desire to dance.
755 Dancing is the central feature of the cult. The spirits are thought to
535 enjoy this dancing; when manifesting themselves at festivities of the

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every step in a man's life. The infant is saturated with medicine: he is made to grow by means of medicine, he is steamed and strengthened, and every upset of the stomach, every sign of disorder, every major change in his life is treated as if it were a grave danger. The child is often inoculated against the 'poisoned shaft', the 'last, fatal arrow' that a malicious enemy might 'hurl' at him. Medicines by anticipation protect those who after their initiation ceremony might be weakened (*hu khuma*) when they resume contact with the world. Even adults in perfect health periodically consult their doctors to discover whether, unknown to them, some one is not planning an attack upon them.

To a European nothing is more amazing than the number of medicines that are tried, rejected, and changed when a man is or supposes that he is ill, unless indeed it is the contradiction that is implied in their preoccupation with their ailments as contrasted with their care-free attitude to life. The Lovedu are always telling of their illnesses, yet they seem to worry as little about them as the Englishman about the weather, although he can hardly converse without complaining about it. It must, therefore, not be imagined that life is weighed down by this interest in ailments; the Lovedu are seldom really depressed. They do not feel at the mercy of a capricious power, for their safety is ultimately in strong hands. They can use medicine to combat witchcraft and, though death is inevitable, their faith in the superiority of the good forces that they can invoke to control evil remains unshaken; for death is only the occasional triumph of evil, which time and again throughout life is defeated by the power of medicine. The outlook which supports security presupposes an ordered universe in which witchcraft is not merely outlawed, but can be overcome by employing well-recognized techniques.

In the face of the danger of the European, the position is entirely different. The white man is conceived to be part of a world which is antagonistic and incomprehensible; its forces are both disruptive, striking at the very significance of life, and capricious, not amenable to control by any known magical techniques. The projection of the danger upon the supernatural is but one aspect of a far wider conflict between European and Native, conqueror and conquered, perpetuated by divergent outlooks and different cultural configurations.

The conflict is an exceedingly complicated one. There is, firstly, the threat to the security of the Lovedu tribe, a threat that strikes particularly at the position of the queen and at the effectiveness of social mechanisms, causing criminals to multiply, encouraging disrespect for parents and for elders, and weakening the force of the reciprocities. Secondly, in the wider contact of Europeans and Natives attitudes have become vitiated by the antipathies that develop between the group of fellow men and the aliens outside it. The loyalties and trust between those within the group become transformed into hatred and suspicion towards those outside it; in the one case the human capacity for self-sacrifice, in the other case the capacity for selfishness, comes into play. Where the whole value system of the one group clashes with that of the other, antipathies are intensified. Moreover, the differences between the groups coincide with pronounced biological distinctions, such as

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colour, and with intense economic competition leading to poor-whiteism, and, as a result, an all-comprehensive theory of innate racial differences becomes a necessary philosophy to the European, while, to the Native, treachery and cunning towards the European become the ethical ideal and anything that he can get away with is thought to be legitimate.

These extremes are not always found, but even where a situation, such as that between farmer and labourer, is not vitiated by a sense of insecurity or the traditional antipathies, it may still give rise to misunderstandings. This is so because the Native is not trained in or conditioned to the European standards of concentration, industry, devotion to a single end, precision, and attention to detail, nor to the European conception of responsiveness to conscience. Many forms of Lovedu self-expression ill fit the contact situation, and often their behaviour is resented as the insolence of an inferior. Europeans may escape the feeling that they are treating the Native inhumanly by devising a theory of racial inferiority; the Natives, often accepting the reality, ascribe their status and misfortunes to the evil motives and systematic persecution of the European. It will not be possible to elaborate this theme, but a few of its aspects may be touched upon.

The vulnerability of the powers of the queen to European interference is one of the reasons for the all-pervading attitude of secrecy towards white men. There is a certain amount of untruthfulness and evasion towards fellow tribesmen: children are warned never to divulge the happenings in their homes or the possessions of their parents. But, as regards the European, deliberate lying is a positive virtue, for the inscrutability of the queen's powers is the essence of their preservation and of men's faith in them and in the queen, and secrecy is the only effective weapon against the European. Since disclosures to Europeans, even of the most commonplace activities or customs, might have unforeseen consequences, threatening the society, secrecy and its concomitants, hypocrisy and duplicity, have become ends in themselves. In our experience, despite our efforts to help people (which they often shamelessly exploited) and to justify the value to the tribe of our work (which made us only more distrusted), threats were often made against those who were our close associates and suspicion rested even on those whom we casually visited, unless, indeed, they could give an assurance that they had deceived us. At last, after incorporating ourselves as *khadi* (father's sister), foster father, and co-wife in various families, we became accepted, made some close friends, and overcame some of the suspicion. But, generally speaking, the good man is he who can circumvent the European and, conversely sometimes, the comprehensible European is he who has cheated the Native. In this context, it is not surprising that the European has an unflattering opinion of the Lovedu. And it is also intelligible that, to an essentially generous and easy-going people and in informal situations, the burden of secrecy imposes too great a strain and from time to time breaks down under cover of privileged confidences and the relaxation of drunkenness, or upon a sudden compulsive frankness. But in formal situations, such as in European courts, the Lovedu rely upon falsehood, and they believe that any lie is good enough to deceive a European.

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Legal relations with Europeans have been tragically misrepresented, for the procedures and sanctions of the European legal drama are not very intelligible. The villains of the piece are the solicitors, who, in their eyes, plot to put an end to reciprocal obligations, and safeguard criminals. These villains appear to be the main actors on the stage, and their victims, baffled by the awesomeness and incomprehensibility of the situation, see the solicitors in the role of conspirators laying schemes behind the scenes, where corruption arbitrarily decides the fate of the victims, or of impostors displaying deceitfully purchased loquacity before the footlights. They see the victim at the mercy of forces that inspire a dread not unlike the dread of being assailed by witchcraft, with this difference—that against witchcraft the sense of security can be regained by invoking magic, while nothing will avail against the awful incomprehensibility of European justice.

The purpose of the whole drama is inscrutable. Should the dock prove to be a trap to the innocent victim, all he can do is to resign himself to the inevitable. Should the offender be acquitted or inadequately punished, he becomes the luckless victim of a new tragedy; his enemies in the society by *hu niclela* magically render him subject to an obsessive compulsion to relapse into crime, so that he may once more re-enact his part as victim in the court and so eventually expiate his original offence. Not only recidivism, but also imbecility, may be the result, for the victim 'will remain laughing at the passing flies'. *Hu niclela* is some kind of answer to the feeling of insecurity before European law, but it is a very inadequate answer: it is not much invoked, it cannot prevent the multiplication of criminals and the growing aggressiveness of witches who escape the clutches of European justice, and it tries to reinstate confidence by relying upon a recidivism which undermines security. To the European, the Native offender is a difficult problem. He will not confide his defence and he wastes time with rambling statements; policemen regard him as insolent and as having gangster proclivities; and the only way to deal with him, it is thought, is by repressive regulations, pick-up vans, and punitive raids.

In the wide expanse of the employment situation there are other difficulties. The sanctions of the reciprocities of Lovedu society are lacking, and the appeal to these sentiments that the European values has little effect, except when the mutualities, the give and take, of Native society can be simulated and the group antipathy or negative identification can be converted into a measure of sympathy or positive identification. Historical factors, proximity, and many other considerations cause the degree of vicarious identification of the hostility with situations and localities to vary, and likewise the difficulties of overcoming the hostility vary. In a locality where, with the best intentions, farmers have ejected Lovedu squatters from their ancestral lands in order to re-employ them as wage-earners, the hostility is fierce and cannot be overcome in the first generation, whatever means are adopted. Of the Government, which they think is always deceiving them, they say, 'Sire of I-come-I-come, the child is already born and has begun to walk', to denote how readily promises are made to come and help, but how dilatory the fulfilment

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is; and as the result there is a profound distrust which vitiates relations. In the situation of a European-owned mission station, both because of the threat attributed to an iconoclastic creed and of the supposed capitalistic exploitation, the services and sacrifices of a missionary are liable to be rewarded with ingratitude and suspicion.

But however favourable the conditions, the difficulties must not be underestimated. It is the sensitive ego that is easily controlled; if a man cannot ordinarily be moved by an appeal to a sense of honour, conscience, or cupidity, moral pressure cannot easily be brought to bear upon him. Not only is the Lovedu ego not vulnerable, but the resort to kindness and the appeal to high motives are liable to be construed as cunning and an attempt to overreach. 'An ingratiating person', such as a European who comes with pleasant words, the Lovedu say, 'lacks not ulterior motive; if he lacks it, he is doomed' (for in any case he will be suspected). No wonder that the European so often believes that firmness and coercion are the only means of controlling the Native.

The different views held by the Lovedu and the European with regard to certainty and precision lead to many conflicts. The lack of Lovedu insistence upon these traits gives an appearance of irresponsibility and disregard of obligations against the background of European society; and the white man readily believes that Natives are innately like children and always need supervision. As employers, masters, and administrators, Europeans have, in the setting of a competitive, calculating society, no alternative but to stress punctuality and precise regulation; but they are wrong in supposing that the essence of every society must be its regulative aspect and that anarchy must follow if irregularities and disregard of rigid procedures are allowed. The meticulous fulfilment of obligations, upon which the Western commercial structure depends, is not necessary in the timeless Lovedu culture, with its reliance upon long-run reciprocities. The Lovedu would easily understand the parable in which the people who worked for an hour in the vineyard in the cool of the evening received as much reward as those who had toiled there all day long in the hot sun, for they have little patience with the dull, mechanical systems that measure merit, work, and time by a highly graduated yardstick. In the hierarchy of Lovedu interests and necessities, time and punctual fulfilment of promises are secondary; but this does not mean that in the setting of the culture people are irresponsible and unreliable.

The beer-drinking of Natives is the bugbear of the European employer; it is a real problem to the farmer. Even in the Reserve its social function is gradually giving way to its pathological one. There are many reasons for the change: the greater abundance of grain, the increasing monotony of life, the sense of frustration, and the recognition in the society that relief and excess may be displayed in states of exhilaration. Farmers legitimately complain of the demoralizing effect of beer. Beer can never be used in its full cultural context on the farms, and its prior claims to time and interest can never be harmonized with the requirements of labour service. The problem that is raised is apparently insoluble, for total prohibition of beer leads to the surreptitious drinking of injurious, rapidly maturing concoctions, to a sense of grievance on the part

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of the Native, to his increased hostility to greater police activities, to evasions of and disrespect towards the law, and to irritation and loss of time by the farmer in prosecuting offenders. In the contact situation, the food becomes a drug and the vehicle of social intercommunication becomes the means of dipsomaniacal escape.

Similarly, it would be possible to show the inevitability of other attitudes of European and Lovedu to one another; but here as elsewhere in this book we must frankly admit that volumes will have to be written before the situation has been fully described. The opinions of the Lovedu held by Europeans are, however, not based upon unrealities. It is true that the Lovedu in the contact situation are liable to be indolent, irresponsible, unreliable, ungrateful, untruthful and irrational. Traders have reason to be exasperated by conduct and by the operation of motives which run counter to all their reasonable expectations. The farmer does not, without reasons which are very real to him, call them 'creatures' or regard them as drunkards who, incapacitated week-end after week-end, justify their existence by work in the intervals between bacchanalian feasts. Those who labour to elevate the 'barbarian', to give him the blessings of a new culture or religion, or to promote his material advancement do in fact find their sacrifices rewarded with ingratitude and advantage taken of their labour of love. These Europeans, as well as the Native, are the victims, sometimes of their personal prejudices, but more often of the whole background of the contact situation. Yet the Lovedu proverb, 'A person is a person; it is a stump that has no ears', encourages the hope that with skilful handling and sympathy the situation may be made to yield to reason.

The anthropologist, who ascribes the practical man's views solely to prejudice and ignorance and, worse still, to inaccurate observation, not only uselessly antagonizes those in closest contact with the Native, thus rendering a disservice to better relations and co-operation, but also brings discredit upon his field methods and science and condemns them to ineptitude and distrust. Judgements upon motives and attitudes are always liable to grave error, for valuations are subjective and the personality of the observer is as important as the behaviour he observes: two men, one frustrated and the other successful, may come to very different conclusions, though they observe the same behaviour. We must beware lest practical men, familiar with the Native, ascribe our judgements to our preconceptions, especially to a facile toleration of traits to which not we, the observers from without, but they, the employers and administrators, have themselves to adjust realistically. 'Wisdom', say the Lovedu, 'comes from the scar' [of experience]; and it is the practical man, not the anthropologist, who has suffered the wound. There is great need for co-operation and for resolving differences by open discussion, for, to quote another Lovedu saying, 'Quarrels have no hiding place'—that is to say, if people desire amicably to compose their differences.

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Oral traditions of the past, it is said, are unreliable and unverifiable. Accounts by informants about the present are also unreliable and often, unless one lives a lifetime in the society, unverifiable. Even the most elementary facts observed do not speak for themselves and have to be interpreted, and the verification of objective facts becomes a complicated process not unlike verification of historical material from such circumstantial evidence as is provided by comparative study. Certainly, in our experience, what was impressive was the substantial agreement among all the tribes upon the main events and migrations, which also provided useful clues to diffusions of culture in the past. The lack of discrimination as regards place and time and the dramatizations and justifications were difficulties which gradually disappeared as the background of comparison was enlarged. Even the discrepancies, seen against the total background, illuminated the local trends and motivations, and proved to be more apparent than real.

Most men of the Lovedu royal group to-day deny their Karanga ancestry, although ten years ago they admitted it. You will tap their memories in vain to discover either the truth or the reason for the change of attitude. But in the light of comparative investigation—for this phenomenon is not unique among the tribes—and of a study of reactions between 1926 and 1936, the change is intelligible. The suspicion that the releasing of land to the Native under the Land Act, in pursuance of a segregation policy, might be a device to dispossess the tribe engendered a profound disturbance to men's sense of security, which could be re-established only by affirming the title of immemorial occupation of Vulovedu. The method of relativistic functionalism ensures, not merely perspective, but also balanced and comprehensive interpretations.

INTERPENETRATION OF THE TRIBES

Lovedu culture as it is to-day is the result of a complicated historical process. For some indication of the genesis of the tribe and of its culture, the reader is referred to the accompanying map; we cannot discuss the evidence in this book.

More than 300 years ago there were tribes sparsely scattered over the whole of the Northern Transvaal. This area lay outside the main migratory currents: Nguni and Tonga coming down on the east, Sotho-Tswana circling the curve of the Limpopo on the west, and Karanga halting between these two to the north of the tsetse-fly belt along the Limpopo. The date of these migrations and their relation to one another is lost in oblivion, but trickles from these currents and backwater eddying from them, particularly from the Sotho-Tswana current, penetrated into the Lovedu lowveld. There were, however, Kwena and Ngwato who descended the escarpment in force only after arrival on the highveld of invaders from the east (Koni, *c.* 1700), the south or south-west (Ɖokwa, *c.* 1760, and Moletshe, *c.* 1750), and the north (Virwa, *c.* 1780). Some of these Kwena and Ngwato form a chain of peoples, no longer independent, from the north, round the west and to the south of Vulovedu, into the political and cultural structure of which many have been incorporated.

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have broken away from Lovedu overlordship since the beginning of the twentieth century, Vulovedu has been crowded and its borders surrounded by Shangana-Tonga.

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It is manifestly impossible to examine in detail the nature and magnitude of the changes in Lovedu culture that may be attributed to the Sotho substratum, Venda, Laudi, Shangana-Tonga, and other tribes. We may, however, as an illustration, cursorily trace the evolution, under these influences, of the Lovedu royal complex of institutions. The germs of this complex come from the ancestors of the royal group. The Portuguese record that only a man without physical imperfections could become chief and that the Mambo handed his daughters to his bodyguard, who gave in return, not bride-price, but *faithful service*. According to Dos Santos,[1] writing in 1601, it was formerly the custom of the kings of Sofala to commit suicide by poisoning when any disaster fell upon them or they were disfigured by a physical defect, and, further, though it was incest outside the royal circle, kings married their own sisters or daughters. Even to-day there is evidence among some Shona of the rite of the door, of women rulers, and of celibate female rain-makers.

This is the nucleus around which the Lovedu have elaborated their royal institutions. Its primary elements did not come in the post-migratory period, for they are, except for the vaguest indications, absent among the Venda, who have always constituted the buffer between Lovedu and Karanga; and their presence among Nareni and Khaha to the south is not a feature of the Laudi or Eastern Sotho, but can be historically traced to the Lovedu. Among the Virwa an attenuated form of this complex may be attributed to Karanga influences. The accretions to and fallings away from the old nucleus were inevitable in the new setting of the Lovedu. The powers of the Karanga high god, who made rain and supported the sacred king, became projected upon the Lovedu queen; a mere vestige is left of the saturnalian licence accompanying the accession of a Karanga chief; and unsuccessful Lovedu claimants to the throne, who generally flee the country after the interregnum, are still referred to as *mambo* (sing. *lembo*). But there is among the Lovedu no sign of the resuscitation of the spirit of the deceased Karanga king in the maggots emerging from the decaying body as it lies sealed in a special hut before burial.

It is curious that among the Mamavolo, after 250 years of subjection to influences of the Sotho substratum and the Western and Central Sotho, this complex has been obliterated, while among the Lovedu it has been elaborated. The varying response is, however, intelligible in the light of their different histories. The Mamavolo, hiving off from the main body, were overwhelmed by the Sotho; even a cursory study shows how they lost their bearings and abandoned their faith in their heritage and, for security, remodelled their institutions upon those of their powerful neighbours. But the Lovedu maintained their dominance in their lowveld environment; they dealt with the challenges of invaders by elaborating the royal pattern so as to absorb them; and they responded to the prevailing belief that, not a priesthood, but the chief himself must

[1] Quoted in Theal, *Records of S.E. Africa*, vii. 191, 194.

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174 643 177 mediate for rain by a new conception both of the high god and of the divinity of the queen.

The forces refashioning the old nucleus are the result of composite internal reactions to external influences. In Chapter I ('Pageants of the Past') we saw how, in the face of a feeling of insecurity, Khiali tried to safeguard the succession by casting out the heir, and how the innovation set into motion forces that precipitated the change from kings to queens. Simultaneously came the elevation of the queens to veritable rain-gods. The Lovedu rain-making technique is Sotho and constrains the forces of nature by magic; it is a fundamental departure from the Karanga technique, which uses an appeal to the high god through his priests on the mountain, where he manifests himself in clamour and flame. But there is still a faint connexion, for foreigners allege that Mujaji *herself originally* obtained her power from Levibi, where Mwari appeared in thunder and lightning to a chief of the Tavatsinde, a group among the Venda. *Vuuga ya uuga bula e a na*, thundering [on the mountain of] Vuuga [is followed by] pattering rain, is still the praise-title of the Levibi of Vulovedu. The Lovedu, we surmise, have replaced Mwari by Kuzwane, creator-god, divested of his rain-making and celestial powers, and the word 'Mwari' (or 'Mwali') suggests, even to the Lovedu mind, Muhale, the Lovedu chief who is founder of the tribe, the only semi-hero of legend, and is associated with ritual, as, for instance, the Bird of Muhale in the *vyali* initiation, which is also associated with rain.

But if this is conjecture, it is significant that power to effect the great change from kings to queens was sought in father-daughter incest, a pattern enjoined by the Karanga and considered as the source of fertility among the Shona. Not only did the traditional model sanctify the change, but the success of the experiment was guaranteed by the elaboration of values already existing in the society. Indeed, the change is represented merely as a reassertion of an ancient but fictitious cycle of kings and queens. The accession of a woman, in spite of the high position of women, was obviously a difficulty; but the rationalization provided by a supposed cycle satisfied misgivings, and the change lent itself to transforming the danger of foreign encirclement into an instrument for extending the network of political institutions. The complicated exchanges of the queen's wives constitute only an extension of the old pattern of the house of Mambo, who received daughters from his sub-chiefs in return for protection or food or as a result of conquest, and who handed out his daughters to his personal bodyguard.

In the elaboration of the Lovedu royal complex, the model and justification came from their Karanga ancestors, but the vital addition of a new association of the chief with rain, which is neither Karanga nor Venda, was inspired by Sotho culture. But, in the Sotho substratum, rain, agricultural rites, and the drum cult were inextricably merged and, in the context of the Lovedu pattern, they did not all find an equally firm place. We shall touch lightly upon this complex, noting here merely the extraordinary fact that, despite the long-continued pressure of Venda influences, the Venda contribution to the Lovedu royal pattern is to-day hardly perceptible. The reason lies partly in its incongruity with the

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conception of a female ruler who is also a divine rain-maker, but partly also in the obscuring of the borrowed elements by readjustments since the accession of a queen.

For a time the Lovedu kings followed the custom of the solitary dance (*u pombela*) of the Venda. It was under the inspiration of such a dance just before his death that Mugodo (*c.* 1790) made his famous prophecy. Venda chiefs perform this dance either shortly after accession, when it firmly establishes against all claims their divine title to the throne, or towards the end of their reign, when it symbolizes abjuration of earthly things and elevation to godhead. These conceptions are inconsistent with the Lovedu pattern, which prescribes the rite of the door as the title to succession, and safeguards the *queen's inscrutability by making* her the inaccessible 'huckster in her hut'.

The special Venda disposition of forces and persons in the organization of the royal court has left numerous marks in Lovedu culture and its reception facilitated the transition from kings to queens. The *khadi* (father's sister or the sister), as priestess, is in a favourable position to assume control during the minority of the heir, as is the case to-day among the Sekhopo and in many districts in Uulovedu. There is also the critical instance of the Mamaila, where between 1825 and 1895 sometimes men and sometimes women ascended the throne, and where the interaction of the two patterns may be closely observed. The Venda emphasis on the virginity, for a time, of the chief's wives has had widespread repercussions even as far as the Nareni; and among the Lovedu it has become interlocked with the cogs of the political machinery, so that, while the permanently chaste are rewarded, the unchaste go out as wives of great men to strengthen their loyalty to the royal house. Nowhere else has such an ingenious solution or reinterpretation been evolved, though the differing readjustments among the various tribes show amazing inventiveness and resourcefulness.

The patterns and culture elements of the royal complex among the surrounding tribes, which have found no place in the Lovedu complex, are too numerous to mention; but what is rejected is just as important as what is adopted in the evaluation and interpretation of the forces determining change. Least has been taken from the modern Shangana-Tonga, but there are similarities in detail, though not in pattern, which may be ascribed to a common heritage of the distant past. It is, for instance, only the Tonga in these parts who have to any extent elaborated the idea of placing chiefs' wives as rulers in the provinces, a practice known among the Lovedu kings long before the arrival of the Shangana-Tonga. Among the Shangana-Tonga the accession of a brother to the throne admits of the progressive realization of aspirations fostered by a culture in which at one and the same time the hierarchy of age and the coincidence of maturity with the peak of life as well as display and competition are more emphasized than among the Lovedu. This pattern is quite unacceptable among the Lovedu.

There are many other suggestive contrasts, but what must surprise the observer is the small contribution (apart from the rain-making technique) of the Sotho from the south and west. The distribution of medicated

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174 seeds by the chief, as among the highveld Sotho, is thought to savour
643 of witchcraft, as only witches use medicine to make the crops grow. The
177 Pedi pattern of the 'tribal candle', the chief wife whose first son succeeds and whose bride-price is contributed by the tribe (who thereby obtain a stake in the succession) has penetrated far. It has been partially accepted by the Laudi as well as the Sekhɔpɔ; but the Lovedu have not been influenced. Of absorbing interest and immense interpretative value has been the conflict of Lovedu and Pedi patterns where their incongruity precipitated a crisis among the Nareni and Khaha.

Everywhere in the lowveld the transition from kings to queens caused disturbances, and the form of justification invariably reflects values in the cultures concerned. Among the Mamaila the change is justified by the sin of the male heir. When the change first occurred, the male heir was ousted because he had cohabited with his father's wives, which is a disqualification by Venda standards. Thereafter males again ruled. When the change occurred a second time, the male heir was driven off because he had broken open the door, which is a sin by Lovedu standards.

Among the Khaha of Maake and the Nareni, both Mahlo and Letswalo, the position is different and may be considered less cursorily, though unfortunately only in very broad outline. The Khaha, greatly disturbed by invasions from the south, sought stability by trying to imitate Mujaji I, the security of whose tribe they attributed to her feminine powers and longevity. In those days (1827) the Mafefe, following the Pedi pattern of royal marriage, politically dominated the Khaha as well as many other tribes. Nevertheless, among the Khaha, Mali, a woman, succeeded as chief against her brothers and was 'placed' by Mujaji. She was the first Khaha female ruler, modelled her court upon the Lovedu pattern, and even adopted ritual suicide as a means to power. The whole Lovedu pattern was not incorporated, for the traditional basis was lacking, especially as regards the ascendancy of women, the unquestioned acceptance of the caprices of the door, and the conception of receiving tributary wives and redistributing them. Thus men were not excluded from the throne. Mali herself, having failed to prevent the flight into exile of her people, was succeeded by a male chief; but in 1928 a woman, Mali II (or Maake, as she is sometimes called), was called upon to rule. Mali II was married, was asked to renounce her husband, as queens could have no official husbands, and when she refused she had to abdicate and now reigns merely as regent during the minority of her brother. The task of integrating the Lovedu with the Khaha pattern was never completed: the door is invoked to decide only between rivals with plausible claims, and no adequate solution has been found to harmonize the Pedi and Lovedu patterns of royal marriage. The chief wife even of the queen among the Khaha is the mother's brother's daughter, and it is for her marriage that in theory each district head must contribute cattle 'to seek their mother' (*hu nyagela mma vɔna*).

Among the Mahlo Nareni, sporadically dominated by the Mafefe until as late as 1901, the change came under conditions of European control (1923). The door entrusted the rain charms and chieftainship to Manjana, wife of the deceased chief, Segɔrɔrɔ. But when strife occurred, the

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European intervened, construed the opening of the door as coincidence, and recognized a son of Segɔrɔrɔ's first wife. (Incidentally, the Pedi conception of the 'tribal candle', though accepted for a time, by 1923 was again receding before the old Laudi insistence that the mother's brother's daughter required no additional support to be chief wife.) To-day the tribe is split: Manjana's magic has power to call up the clouds, but the quackery of the recognized chief sweeps up gales which scatter the rain.

Among the Letswalo the change, motivated by a desire for security, aggravated a crisis which continued into the European period and was ended by the drastic intervention of the European. *Ramɔdau*, son of chief Bodile, defied his father by refusing to espouse his one-eyed cross-cousin, whom Bodile himself then married. But this wife turned out to be a witch who expiated her offence of stealing the rain charms by being mauled to death by a lion. Angered by his son's disobedience and his wife's treachery, Bodile then (*c.* 1850) prophesied the coming of the ants and the accession of a woman; but in the total setting of the drama the son's disobedience is condoned by representing his cross-cousin as a deformed witch and the treachery that threatens the welfare of the tribe is made the occasion for the accession of Magaepia, daughter of Bodile. The whole theme is handled less skilfully than among the Lovedu and indicates the existence of many conflicting motives. Before Magaepia succeeded there were wholesale assassinations of successive heirs; Magaepia, having replaced the lost rain charms, became, first, rain-maker to Ramadau and, after his death at the hands of the Swazi invaders, queen, but only of a portion of the tribe. The strife continued, the European intervened, and, when the tribes of the lowveld rose against the encroaching settlers (1894), the Letswalo joined them, but suffered a devastating defeat.

Changes can be traced in all aspects of Lovedu culture, some greater, some smaller than those in their royal institutions. It will take us too far afield to deal with these changes, but a few remarks may be of interest. Almost nothing of the *gomana-vyali-vuhwera-vudiga* complex came with the royal group. Some of it can be attributed to the Sotho substratum: it is the *ɖou* of Ravothata who make the *gomana* drums and close the *vyali* with their weirdly costumed dancers, the *magɔgɔbya*; the Kwena likewise claim always to have had the *gomana*; and Lovedu boys are allowed to become initiated at the *gomana* lodges of the *ɖou* of Khaɖa and of the Kwena of Maunaɖala, who also may accept royal boys to 'cross rapidly' (*hu ɖubunya*), or become initiated in a few days, at his *vuhwera*. The *magɔgɔbya* are unique, but are found also among the *ɖou* of Masoma and it is from Tsubye (the country of present-day Shai) that these costumes came over a century ago, having been brought by two men named Maehisa and Dinawe. The evidence may be indefinitely multiplied, but it is more interesting to examine for a moment the different manifestations of the complex over the Northern Transvaal, because what has been emphasized in it or muted or rejected illuminates the character of the incorporating culture.

We have no evidence of the occurrence beyond the Northern Transvaal of the sacred drums, considered as shrines consecrated by human sacrifice

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and as the focus of a 'school' for revealing the secrets of the whistling ancestors (*zwiɖajani*). Some Venda north of the Limpopo have drums of the *mɔndɔɔ* (spirits of the chiefs) and *zwiɖajani* (familiars of Mnisi, the rain-god), and there is some evidence of drum ritual among Pedi, Venda, and even Tonga; but the elaborated drum cult belongs to the Northern Sotho. It has three characteristic elements: the supreme moments of the agricultural year are signalized by the sounding of the drums and the cult is intimately linked with rain or fertility; these calendric observances, as well as other great national occasions, are, by the interposition of the drums, brought under the surveillance of the tribal gods, represented by men masquerading as spirits who have come to earth; and in a special initiation novices are inducted into the secrets of the cult.

This constellation is most emphasized in three tribal groups: Laudi (especially Phalaborwa), Maɖala, and Xananwa-Ɗɔkwa-Moletshe. Among the Phalaborwa the striking emphasis is upon the link with rain-making, upon the *lengu* or women's counterpart, and upon the exulting display before the drums which is permitted to those who have military and hunting exploits to their credit. These features become progressively attenuated westwards towards Ulovedu. The stress upon display reappears among the Maɖala, though in a different form, for there we find the esoteric *khidinkhi*, which is at once a dramatic dance inspired by the sacred drums glorifying the prowess of the chief and of warriors, and a rain and fertility rite, blessing cattle and crops and safeguarding the people against disease. In drawing into the complex the welfare of the cattle and in the absence of the *lengu*, the Maɖala pattern differs from that of the Laudi, but approximates that of the Xananwa-Ɗɔkwa-Moletshe. These differences coincide with the emphases of the different cultures. The Laudi have an attenuated cattle-cult, though it is better developed than among the Lovedu; whereas the highveld Sotho, influenced from the west and south-west, have a fuller cattle-cult, though by no means as elaborate as that of the west (Tswana) with its seasonal migratory life, conditioned partly by pastoralism and partly by a desire for security in a difficult environment. Among the Laudi men's and women's initiations are often combined, but on the highveld they are markedly separated, for the *nyali* and *mukwera* exist as distinct institutions and the Bird, guiding spirit of the *nyali*, is usually absent. In the third area, that of the Xananwa-Ɗɔkwa-Moletshe, the dispositions are in many respects quite distinctive. The drums become the focus of an elaborate fertility cult, rain-making stands outside the complex, and the chief *motif* is not display, but dramatization of obedience to the gods and loyalty to the chief. The supreme moment is when the manhood of the tribe, collected in the cattle kraal, receive the command of the gods communicated, under inspiration of the drums, by the *zwiɖajani*.

There is every possible variation in the patterns among the intervening tribes. In some, such as Tswale, Moila, Dikxale, Mamaɔɔlo, and Uirwa of Makhatho, the cult is often structurally unintegrated, standing outside the province of the chief and consisting merely of 'schools' managed by outsiders who have their own drums. The cult in these cases is practised merely for revenue purposes; it is a 'business' as the

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Natives say; the alien drums are pierced and rendered useless at the death, not of the chief, but of their owners; and the *mwidzjoni* are often visitors from tribes where the cult is better developed. Among the Lovedu the cult has been only partially accepted; the pattern is the pattern of the focal area in the east. The features that have been attenuated or elaborated can be explained in the light of the emphasis of Lovedu culture: there is no display, no stress upon fertility, no linking with the welfare of the cattle, no elaboration in connexion with agricultural ritual, but the *mwidzjoni* command peace and agreement among men.

Elsewhere in this book we have given slight indications that the Lovedu interlocking *mawyaalo* exchanges and social structure can be traced to Karanga models; that the Lovedu have rejected the pattern of the wedding feast and wedding gifts which comes from the west; that Lovedu legal arrangements are the resultant of composite forces; that the smeller-out and the cult of spirit possession come from the Shangana-Tonga and Thavhda. These and many other borrowed culture elements may be followed up with advantage, and indicate the magnitude of culture change. But for our purposes, before proceeding to discuss the nature and effect of the impact of Western culture, a brief reference to Shangana-Tonga influences will suffice. Despite similarities in detail—an attenuated boys' puberty rite, the conception of *mukhuma* (ritual defilement), the indirect warning to the witch by *ku thela*, to mention a few features—and despite the extensive reception by the Lovedu of Shangana-Tonga elements of material culture—fowls, various crops, and methods of storing and threshing and stamping—the striking feature remains the great gulf between the two cultural configurations. They have, for instance, different views as regards sex morality, different marriage patterns, different conceptions of the hierarchy of age and the position of women; they deal differently with the situation of death, with rain-making, display, and regimentation, and, whereas the social groupings are totemic among the Lovedu, they are non-totemic among the Shangana-Tonga.

There are many other divergences, but one difference that calls for comment is the attitude to and reception of European culture. More adaptable, if brazen, than the Lovedu, at least in their new environment, the Shangana-Tonga have, as fugitives under Sotho domination, more complacently submitted themselves to European conquest. Disciplined by the military heritage of the Zulu, they made efficient police and soldiers, especially against their Sotho overlords. Their training in competition, trade, and display enabled them to respond better than the Lovedu to the stimuli of Western culture. Above all, European penetration benefited them, while it dispossessed the Sotho. The history of the contacts and reactions is the history of a century, which is far too complicated for treatment here. But this can be said: the Shangana-Tonga gained land and the right to be ruled by their own chiefs; the Lovedu lost land which was given to their erstwhile subjects; the prestige of Mujaji in the eyes of the white man waned while that of Shangana-Tonga chiefs waned; and the Shangana-Tonga subservience

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177 to the European hardened Lovedu antagonism and resistance both to the European and to his protégés.

THE ICONOCLASM OF CHRISTIANITY

177 797 Effective European contact with the tribes of the lowveld began only in the decade 1880–90. At first Mujaji II hoped to play off Christianity and the secular authorities against one another, but they proved to be inseparable allies. Christianity in those days tolerated no compromise with pagan practices: it could not envisage the salvation of souls except through sweeping away heathen custom. It interceded on behalf of the Native against the encroachments of an acquisitive society, but conducted its crusade with the support of the civil arm of that society. When Mujaji was recalcitrant, she was reminded of the fate of Sekukuni (1877) and Cetewayo (1879); when she complained that the new creed was iconoclastic, Albasini replied that the Government also 'had the Book'; and when farms were parcelled out to settlers, the missionary became landlord of 4,850 acres and exacted labour and fees from his tenants. The Native was already angered by the raids of Buys, servant of the Republic, freebooter, and 'upperhead or great captain', and of Albasini, Native commissioner, Portuguese trader, and self-appointed chief of the Magwamba (Knobnose-Shangana-Tonga). Thus he could hardly have been expected to receive with open arms either the missionary or the settler.

The highest praise is due to the missionary for his superhuman efforts, his espousal of the cause of the Native, his intercession that gave the Lovedu their location, his unrewarded labour of love, and the inestimable gift of education and a new outlook on life that he brought. Too little has been made of these services, of the difficulties overcome and of the ingratitude he encountered. Khasbani, first evangelist and royal kinsman, was martyred (1884); and so fierce was the resistance to Christianity that the drought of 1881–2 was attributed to those who were its apostles. But all this we must pass over, for it is with the reception of Christianity and Western culture into Lovedu culture and its response to the challenge that we are concerned.

The historical background of Christianity is a sharp differentiation of converts from pagans, in order to minimize the danger of relapsing and to ensure the growth of solidarity and communal interests in splendid Christian isolation. But the result was the ranging of Christians and pagans in opposite camps and fierce conflicts of loyalty. The history of Western culture is not distinct all along the line from Christianity, but it may be distinguished as distant and distasteful control rather than direct and deliberate disruption of custom, causing hindrances and frustrations and antagonism among all sections, not preaching a new way of life to the carefully segregated few.

The great changes effected by Christianity are those among converts. Half a century of evangelization has brought forth conversion among 3 to 5 per cent. of the Lovedu. Beyond this small insulated minority there have been repercussions, but, owing to the segregation of the Christians in mission settlements and the protective secrecy of the pagans, these repercussions have not been great.

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By far the greatest concentration of Christians is upon Medingen, the mission-owned farm. In 1936 the total population of Medingen was 1,870, of whom 893, or just over 47 per cent., were Christians. In 1911 the population was 1,731, and, as nearly as can be determined, 780, or 45 per cent., were Christians; and the figures respectively for 1921 were 1,883 and 990, or 52 per cent. The striking fact is that, despite the many influences favouring an increase of numbers, the percentage of Christians has remained practically stationary. The most powerful missionizing agent is the school, which is attended by about 300 children, who tend to complete their school careers with confirmation; moreover, in the past, Christians from everywhere sought sanctuary on the mission station, while there are powerful evangelizing forces on the station as well as obstacles to the settlement there of pagans. Figures of increases or decreases are not available for the rest of Vuloredu, where one of the most significant phenomena is the relapse to paganism in the last decade of large numbers of the royal sons. Among those who have relapsed, however, an impression has been made, though often they are, like the sophisticated Native, the most implacable enemies of the faith in which they have been nurtured. It is the disruptive effect of Christianity upon custom as seen among converts living on mission stations that we propose first of all to examine, turning thereafter to positive contributions among these converts and ending with a brief consideration of the repercussion among the rest of the population.

The distinctive feature of Christianity is that it breaks down in order to build up. In the form in which it appears on the mission stations it is not merely hostile to repugnant custom, but also works against everything that can be recognized as custom. Converts and their teachers hold that, without complete and irrevocable severance from traditional values, the emotional background easily reasserts itself and undoes the work of Christianity. Participation even in innocent heathen life evokes disturbing associations. To outlaw merely the repugnant part of a custom is useless; the prohibition must be total. An attempt to differentiate is like an attempt to give reasons; the reasons for a thing are liable to be confused with its substance and explanations often merely obscure the issue. The old, even if only doubtfully incompatible with Christian practices or beliefs, must not be presented to conscious attention. Hence Christianity draws the individual away from all things tribal. Compromises are impossible upon such questions as the freedom of the sexes, beer-drinking, polygyny, and among the older population even *mangwalo* (bride-price); there is no room for a liberal interpretation of our system of religion or morality. The policy in the past has never been to graft the new upon the old; it has been to destroy the cultural pattern and to substitute another, irrespective of whether it could be woven into the remainder of the social scheme or harmonized with existing beliefs and institutions.

This is not an indictment of missionary effort; it is the result of a considered policy conceived to be in the best interests of posterity. The mission had, from the earliest times, to contend with lack of discipline, slackness where there was no supervising foreman irritating habits of

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177 duplicity and ingratitude, suspicion, and attempts to take advantage of
797 kindness. These were construed as barbaric traits that had to be uprooted. There appeared, in addition, to be an unusually large number of anti-Christian practices: the tribal justice, proceeding upon no fixed principles, seemed corrupt; there were periodical smellings-out of witches; people believed in the divinity of the queen. Dancing and drumming were obnoxious, not merely because they were 'heathenish din', but also because of their association with the idolatry of the *digoma* and the 'schools', the sexual laxity at the *gisha* dances and possession by spirits.
[533] There were also mendicant minstrels who played the xylophone (*dibila*) and sang for their food and lodging, whose songs did not always express Christian sentiments. One, for instance, not long ago, used to sing, 'Christians are cheats who put us to sleep before we eat [referring to grace], so as to kill us unawares', and another's song rang more crudely: 'The husbandless woman climbs to the roof of the hut; she urinates and the rats fall down in a faint'.

Early Church policy laid down what should be outlawed on mission-owned farms: wife-purchase, shrines, *digoma*, rain-making, witchcraft, divination, 'strengthenings with medicine', the consecration of weapons, and other repugnant customs. It stamped as particularly reprehensible theft, sexual offences, opposition to the Church, and, later, migration to seek employment in the sinful towns. The sanctions with which it can enforce obedience upon a self-governed estate include refusal of such privileges as baptism and confirmation, public denunciation in church, various penalties, such as road-making and catechism classes, and even expulsion from the mission station. Natives believe that the whole system is served by a network of espionage, and the intrinsic difficulties of the situation have been immensely increased by the fact that financially the mission station largely relies upon the contributions in fees and work of its tenants. On one occasion a self-constituted committee of disaffected tenants in Johannesburg, who were in arrears, accused the mission of capitalistic exploitation and of robbing the Natives of their country, and drastic action was necessary.

177 The Christian attack upon the marriage pattern and especially polygyny
795 has led to many subtle reactions. Devout Christians of the old order still
184 refuse to accept cattle, but surreptitiously pocket money payments which by the nature of the case can be used to subserve personal, not social, ends. The Church no longer sets its face against *mawundo*, but seeks to turn it into a kind of dowry, and Christians call it 'thanks'. The Christian's freedom of choice of a mate weakens the reciprocities and emphasizes independence and materialism at the price of the patterns of co-operation and long-range mutuality. A Christian often marries a non-relative, but cannot easily escape the complex net thrown over the whole social structure by the cattle exchanges. He may have to face the opposition of those relatives whose displeasure may cause illness to him or his family. If he marries a second wife, his cross-cousin, he is excommunicated, and he will be unable, even on his death-bed, to secure the final consolation and blessing of the Church unless he sets aside his pagan wife. Polygyny, the inheritance of wives, and beer are so deeply rooted in

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the culture that they constitute the gravest difficulties of the mission as well as the most formidable obstacles to embracing Christianity. Christians are required to build a house before marriage: this again tears them out of the context of parental influences. Wedding feasts and bridal gifts introduce the pattern of the highveld Sotho and of the towns, but without serious disruptive effects.

Christian marriage sets up community of property and strikes at the economic independence of women; it emphasizes patriliny, but, in compensation, introduces a conception of marital companionship. Families are larger, because the old spacing of children has broken down: monogamy, proscription of the institution of 'lovers' (*vuḓavu*), the opposition to anything pagan, the diminished control of the old women are some of the reasons. There is more illegitimacy because the marriage of girls is later, examination for virginity is considered un-Christian, the disciplinary influences of the initiation 'schools' and of parental authority have weakened, and there is no training in the rules of incomplete sexual intercourse. Among some of the other results, it may be said that Christians are less complaisant about the infidelity of their spouses and that the care of a brother's widow occasions serious conflicts.

The iconoclastic effect of Christianity may be illustrated in a few other spheres of culture. Christians often object to performing the services to the chief expected of every tribesman. At the capital they plough one of the queen's fields, but have largely withdrawn themselves or have been excluded from the political and legal organization. They do not submit themselves to procedures involving appeal to the smeller-out, regard as repugnant the duties of messengers in 'blood' cases and, by extension, those of all court messengers, and, since the regular court sessions are held on Sunday, they cannot attend them, nor indeed are they welcomed as members of the *khoro*. At Medingen the districts are not recognized and the majority of offences come before the council of elders or the missionary. Christians disregard traditional holidays and taboos, such as those after deaths and the first rains or when lightning strikes down to earth. They defiantly plough over sacred places to show the absurdity of superstitious fears. They neither kill twins nor observe the rules as to burial in wet places. They oppose the 'schools', avoid the dances and ignore the firstfruits rites.

It is un-Christian to become possessed or to have the 'dirt'-removing rite after death. Even important royal kinsmen who become Christians must be buried in the Christian cemetery, not where they will be contaminated by heathenish associations. The bearers are Christians, and pagan relatives follow the hearse in the rear, segregated from the Christians, for they do not know the hymns that are sung. The corpse is made to face west, towards the setting sun, not north, whence the Lovedu came. When the queen's brother, who became a Christian on his death-bed, was buried, the only concession permitted to custom was the placing of an ox skin upon the coffin; no wonder that his spirit did not long lie at rest and that subsequent drought was attributed to his complaints. Not only are pagans and Christians separated in the

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177 795 184 procession to the grave, but, after burial, relatives on each side have their separate rites.

All this is but a reflection of the attempt to make the segregation as complete as possible. Even the visible evidence of different styles of building, of dressing, and of living together was in the past more boldly thrown into relief by the geometrical villages, with their square houses fronted by flower gardens and straight streets crossing one another at right angles and ornamented with orange trees. But the Christians' efforts to differentiate themselves from pagans are limited by two main factors. Neither the Bible nor their limited experience of the world has suggested too many different ways of living and behaving. In large spheres of culture they know no more than is supplied by the traditional background; and limited resources often make impracticable the adoption of different standards and attitudes.

Christians tend to defer in everything, not to the tribal, but to the church authorities. Local problems and church matters, as well as relations with the European, are advised upon and guided by the church and its officials. Christians set themselves up as interpreters of and intermediaries with the European; they tend to assume command upon occasions of European festivities or of intervention, except that of official business with the chief or the councillors. They crowd round inquisitively when agricultural officials arrive, while pagans avoid them; they prepare the programme or draw up the illuminated address when there is a celebration, such as the Coronation in 1937 or an agricultural show. And they work out these plans and addresses in consultation, not with the tribal authorities, but with the evangelist. It is not unnatural, for they complain that the tribal authorities will never learn and never listen to their advice or accept their suggestions. All this occasions friction and divided allegiance, it weakens the authority of the queen, and it antagonizes the pagans.

In recent years there has been more co-operation. The old influential Christians have died and the educated young pagans have learnt to manage things for themselves. Agricultural officials, despite active resistance from pagans and co-operation from Christians, realize that their work is incomplete without sustained efforts to secure the interest of the pagans. Christians are vouchsafed no information from the capital and their opportunities of leadership and interference become limited. Jealousies among Christians have led to disunity and they have lost control of the postal arrangements. The secretarial duties of the chief are undertaken jointly by a Christian and several pagans. And young men who in the past found their major opportunities in identifying themselves with the Christians are beginning to find it more profitable to side with the pagans. This is but a reflection of more universal trends: the importance of the church has receded before the rapid expansion of the activities of the administration, industry, and commerce; these activities are no longer in active co-operation with Christianity, and differences in religious outlook between pagans and Christians tend to be over-shadowed by the feeling of common hostility to and distrust of the European. How far the new tendencies will lead to constructive

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co-operation and to bringing Christians into more realistic touch with the total tribal environment are questions too large for consideration here.

But Christianity has not destroyed only; it has also built up. Christians wholeheartedly embraced education; pagans, believing that education implies the acceptance of a foreign faith, are torn by conflicting loyalties, and their ardent desire to acquire the three R's expresses itself in the attempts made to set up a tribal school, which will be the agent, not of an alien creed, but of traditional values. Education and the outlook it has engendered have equipped Christians for meeting the impact of Western conquest and culture. Schoolchildren lose much of the lore of the veld and the training of the tribal initiations, but they gain new games, new skills, and new knowledge, implicit in which are assumptions regarding the nature of man and the purpose of existence. The church, through its preachings and schools, has been the channel of more than half the influences of Western ethics and culture in their positive effects. Its future lies in its control of education, for its religious mission has become submerged in a mass of technical and routine duties, entailing the preparation of pupils for examinations and the filling up of forms, with consequent loss of personal contacts and pastoral care. Its religious influence is evident in grace at meals, prayers for oneself, church services, Biblical Christian names, feasts, sacraments, and periodical visits of the women of one settlement to commune with and advise those of another. But on the whole the purely religious has been eclipsed by the educational effects. The two are inextricably interwoven; and their separation might well mean that Christianity will have no message for modern man and will be regarded as linked with the repressive, not the progressive, forces of Western civilization.

The valuable adjustments brought about by Christianity are the adjustments towards the modern world: receptivity to Western standards, less reluctance to co-operate with Europeans, and aspirations to seek self-realization amid the opportunities offered by them. Christians are less sceptical than pagans of European health services and of the innovations of the agricultural demonstrator; and they are better equipped and, until recently, were more eager to accept such Government posts as those of interpreters, policemen, and forest rangers. Only Christians can be teachers. Christians are driven to action by the idea of progress; they seek their future and achievement in change; and they attribute the disabilities under which the tribe suffers to the ignorance of their pagan rulers. Not much of what they have learnt intellectually has merged integrally with their lives, but they are less frustrated than the pagans.

Their outlook stands in close relation to the great extension of economic needs necessitated by Christianity, such as church and school fees, books and occasionally newspapers, better clothes and more European household articles, brick houses, wooden coffins, and burial societies. Their contributions, which help to support the widespread organization and institutions of the Church, constitute one of the main resistances to conversion; but the necessity to meet the new demands has made them keener agriculturalists than are the pagans. You sometimes hear a pagan derisively call out to Christian workers, not the friendly greeting '*Uxolwesi*'

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(workers), but 'Fools, why labour when others rest'; the Christian reply is, 'We are orphans and must work to satisfy our needs.' Christians are for ever planning new schemes and trying new methods; even their women-folk take in washing and, despite the church's discouragement, occasionally seek work in the towns. Christian men eagerly take to making irrigated gardens, and some become transport riders or itinerant hawkers; while it is Christian women who hire out their services to neighbours and make a business of pottery. It is chiefly among Christians that salt, meat, and cash take the place of beer in the work party. The total result is not merely a better economic sense, but also a growth of the spirit of competition and calculation; not merely greater industry and less improvidence, but also exploitation of their fellow tribesmen and self-seeking; and, instead of relying upon the roundabout reciprocities, Christians demand more immediate satisfactions and more precise and personal rewards. Aggressiveness and display, rivalries and suspicion, develop side by side with ideas of progress and a desire for advancement.

There are often fierce jealousies in the Christian settlements, and the tensions occasionally set into motion waves of accusations of witchcraft which break up the settlements. The classical example quoted as evidence of the great incidence of witchcraft among Christians is the disruption of the station at Moila. No one could be trusted, and witches were said to administer medicines to children, taking them out at night to crack their skulls upon the rocks. Christian boys are said to gossip more about witches than do their pagan brothers, and nowhere except in Christian settlements were we warned against accepting food from strangers. Witchcraft among Christians is difficult to observe, as it is driven underground; Christians do not publicly appeal to the smeller-out or seek the diviner to discover the cause of death, but they secretly consult the bones and slander the enemies that are thought to have sent the death. They tend to combat witchcraft, not by open accusation, but by privately 'sending back' the evil; and they firmly believe that the queen makes rain, albeit through the grace of the Christian God. The pollution that prevents rain is ascribed to sin—especially incest, rape, adultery, sexual offences, murder, and witchcraft—rather than to wrong burials. Tensions in the Christian settlements and the suspicion of espionage increase secretiveness about personal business, fields, and crops; but Christians are far more communicative than pagans about tribal matters and custom.

Amid conflicting tendencies, we find it difficult to say whether witchcraft is more prevalent among Christians than among pagans. The new outlook upon the nature of man and of his purposes increases tensions and rivalries, but also calls into question the assumptions of magic and witchcraft; and proscription leads to more underground activity and the development of new techniques, but also drives out of the field the visible reminders of the world of supernatural forces. In our opinion, the total situation may be summed up in the words of a Christian informant who has maintained intact his tribal background: 'Education gives men the power of witchcraft, and when we all are educated we shall all be witches, but, like Europeans, quite harmless to one another.'

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The repercussions of the Christian outlook in the tribe as a whole may be referred to briefly. The tendencies are changing because of the recent re-absorption of Christians into the tribe, but the main results to-day are still those coming from the segregated Christians. Christian holidays have to some extent become part of the life of the tribe. Sunday is, as far as agriculture and building operations are concerned, a day of rest, but, for this reason, it is set aside specially for public business, such as tribal gatherings and *khɔrɔ* trials; and one result is that Christians, even if their moralizing and attempts to improve law and procedure were better tolerated, are excluded from participation. People occasionally have 'beer of Christmas' or 'New Year'. Twin murders can no longer be reported to the queen, as there is danger of implicating her, and Christian women, more interested in the pregnancy, legitimate or otherwise, of their friends, threaten to take action if they suspect a murder. But the effect is unsuspectedly complicated: a pagan mother who under pressure allows her twins to live may be refused assistance by her husband's mother, and often reacts by underfeeding them in order to starve them to death; and much greater secrecy is maintained. In 1923, after a few convictions in the European courts, the queen forbade the killing of twins and ordered births to be reported to the mission station; but the rule became a dead letter as soon as it could be safely circumvented.

Real or pretended sensitiveness among pagans to Christian values has had some effects. Not only do pagans ascribe their misfortunes to disregard of duties fostered by the example of the Christians, but they advance Christian values as excuses for not fulfilling their own obligations. They may condemn the Christian intrusion as causing drought or disobedience, but they may justify their own doubtful behaviour upon principles of Christian ethics. In 1937, for instance, Mashishimali refused to accept a *gɔsha* dance on the ground that his wife's brother, who lived in the village, was a Christian, but the real reason was self-interest and unwillingness to kill a beast and to burden himself with feeding the dancers. For a similar reason, an old woman, nominally a Christian, refused to allow her son to accommodate the dancers, but the reason she advanced was the pagan associations of the drums. Slackness in obeying the queen is ascribed to the example of the Christians, who break taboos with impunity and escape their obligations as messengers of the *khɔrɔ* by declaring that the work is un-Christian.

At one time Christians could terrify pagans by predicting eclipses and locust invasions, visitations which they ascribed to the obstinacy of the pagans in refusing to accept the gospel; this weapon is useless to-day, but the Christian hell causes some uneasiness of conscience and repressed fear, especially evident in dreams and during illness. There are death-bed conversions, and the evangelist is sometimes anxiously called to interpret alarming dreams. Masilu, a budding doctor still learning the bones, which had been discarded by a Christian relative, suffered from a persistent illness. While bed-ridden he dreamt that he had ascended a great ladder half-way to heaven and came to a luxuriant country. There he saw two roads, but he was stopped by the guardian of the gate to which one of these roads led, and told to take the left-hand road going to the

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177 west. He suspected that that road led to hell. The evangelist, called in 184 for consultation, prayed for his soul, explaining that the dream clearly 195 warned the pagan sinner to mend his way of life if he wished to be admitted to the road that led to salvation. Masilu was half-persuaded, but when his wife scorned the imposture and he had regained health, he let the matter slide. But sometimes conversion takes place in such circumstances, especially as the view is held that many people, after a dream of this nature, suddenly die. We may also associate with Christian ethics such phenomena as the growth of a sex-guilt complex, the wearing of blouses to cover the breasts, and the repression of virginity observances.

The persistence of a belief among Christians that the restrictions imposed upon the tribe may be attributed to backwardness and refusal to give up custom has not been without its effects. Sophisticated pagans share this belief with the Christians, but on the whole the assumption of enlightenment and superiority derives from the conception, fostered by Christianity, of the darkness of the pagan world. There is much that can be advanced in support of their contentions: the location allotted to the tribe, it is urged, would have been larger if the whole tribe, not merely a portion of it, had presented itself to General Joubert when, in the 1890s, after their defeat, he commanded their presence in order to enable him to give them land proportionate to their numbers; and, similarly, the stringency of the dipping laws, the absence of any benefits from the fund of the local tax, the ascendancy of the Shangana-Tonga are laid at the door of the ignorance of the councillors. Christians allege that in other tribes, where there has been enlightenment, disabilities have disappeared. Some pagans, half-accepting the impeachment, blame their leaders; others, and they are in the majority and the most influential, resent the imputation and fiercely resist every suggestion that comes from the Christians. On the whole, however, the obvious advantages of knowledge of the ways of the white man and of the outside world cannot be gainsaid: it is the educated Native who gets the best posts and secures exemption from carrying passes. But where enlightenment is paraded by Christians, it merely occasions more resistance and opposition.

THE CHALLENGE OF WESTERN CONQUEST

177 The influence of Western culture, as a force distinct from Christianity, can be fully interpreted only against a background that extends, as regards time, to the earliest contacts between Bantu and European and, as regards space, over the whole of South Africa. Attitudes and reactions observable in Lovedu are often intelligible in the light, not of local misfortunes, but of experiences of tribes in other parts of South Africa. We cannot here discuss this question; indeed, the problems arising from the impact of Western culture within the tribe alone are too complex for summary treatment. On the whole, there has only been legislation against utterly repugnant custom and, until recently, the restrictions that have been efficiently enforced were few, and did not strike directly at the integrity of custom. The policy has been one of *laisser-faire*; and no active attempt has been made to graft new culture elements upon the old patterns. The

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integration that has taken place has been a response of the culture itself to the challenges of the new order. Therein lies the greatest difference from the manner in which Christianity has influenced the culture. Since 1938 the policy has changed somewhat, and there are more active though still not conscious interferences with custom; but among the Lovedu the effect as yet has been negligible. 177

The labour migration to towns and farms, necessitated by taxation, is reluctantly undertaken. The Lovedu are not easy prey to recruiters, who have to give assurances regarding, not only labour and other conditions, but also immunity from arrest for arrears of tax. The ideal is to return home, for 'The only place one never returns to is the womb'. The migration has not had the great effect that is reported in other parts of Africa: very little that is brought back is incorporated into the culture, even the accent men acquire in towns being rapidly discarded: marriage ceremonial does not require the presence of the man, his bridal visits being often undertaken by others; the pivotal position of women in the social structure minimizes disturbances; and, since during the whole suckling period a husband should partially avoid his wife, his absence for six months or so in town is not a serious problem as far as sexual adjustments are concerned. The absence of the men creates difficulties in holding the initiations and in economic dispositions. But the salient fact is that the energies liberated by the use of the plough exceed the drain caused by the labour migration. Old men, who no longer pay taxes, conduct the political and legal affairs of the tribe, and women, who do not migrate, control religion and ritual.

In legal arrangements there have been changes. But the deprivation of the power to enforce decisions means little to the old culture, which never relied upon force, though it may mean something when the sanction of reciprocity has become undermined. The force of the law is being destroyed, not by the limited jurisdiction allowed, but by the interference of solicitors and the multiplication, so it is believed, of criminals acquitted or protected by the European. Witches, they say, escape punishment by Europeans, because Europeans neither have witchcraft nor understand its workings. We have elsewhere noted some readjustments in legal procedure. Here we need add only a few further points The *khɔrɔ* must be careful lest dissatisfied litigants report procedures or decisions that are illegal by European standards; but, on the other hand, it sometimes threatens recalcitrant debtors with the dire consequences of being sent to the European, and such is the disinclination to be judged by the European that the threat is generally effective. The *khɔrɔ*, for instance, takes care not to order an expulsion (which is illegal) before the crops are reaped, as the victim is then more liable to appeal, while many cases may be quoted in which the threat to send a litigant to the Native Commissioner has led to a solution by agreement. The weakening of the sanctions of reciprocity has led to increasing resort, not to the European courts, but to 'sending back' the evil. 177 692

The *khɔrɔ* has more and more to deal with written evidence, such as cattle lists, letters between the parties and from farmers, and pieces of paper on which had been noted the marriage cattle that have passed. 177 695

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177 695 The handling of this evidence is woefully unskilful, but important distinctions must be made. Where the writing takes the place of the notches that used to be cut on sticks to indicate the cattle that had passed, it tends to be accepted if there is other supporting evidence; statements in a letter of the amount of money sent with the letter are generally given credence; but sentiments expressed in letters and written accounts of the circumstances of a case are usually completely ignored or dismissed as unimportant. In one case where a husband wrote that he had definitely deserted his wife, the court ignored the letter on the ground that, unless the husband gave his evidence in person, he might well reverse his attitude and appeal to the Native Commissioner. The subject of the development in the handling of written evidence is a large one; but to what we have said we would merely add that the recording of evidence in writing has been attempted, since 1932, in only fifteen cases all told. The attempt has miserably failed. The usual record reads approximately as follows: 'Andrew Malopo *v.* £19. 5 Jim Malate 2/8/32', and to that cryptic statement nothing is added by way of such embellishment as the nature of the case, whether the date refers to the day of trial or retrial or payment, whether in fact there has been payment, and so on. Native Commissioners have sometimes tendered advice about how cases should be decided and recorded, but it is beyond their province, and the results have been precisely nil.

177 642 Political institutions have suffered no fundamental change. External relations are maintained through the wives the queen still receives from, and the rain she still gives to, foreign chiefs; the suppression of military exploits and cattle raids has not affected the Lovedu. Relations with European authorities have modified initiative and control over large spheres of policy, for the tribal authorities receive instructions rather than discuss suggestions, though consultation is nowadays a recognized preliminary to the introduction of an innovation. The tribal gathering (*khivij*) never was important in Uloredu; now it discusses perhaps more tribal matters than in the past, as well as European proposals and demands, but it has little power. The councillors, presenting European matters, sometimes give a distorted version, finding it difficult to justify either the measure proposed or their inability to bring about modifications or to circumvent it; and very often they do not mention important points at all. The widespread tendency to justify a desired action by saddling the European with responsibility for it reappears again and again. The people may be told by the councillors (who have a car) to mend the road, because, they say, an official who broke the spring of his car upon it has complained to the Native Commissioner; the administrative admonition to maintain better control over young boys going to work without their parents' consent was presented to the tribal meeting as a warning that boys not carrying tax receipts would be arrested if found at beer parties. (By traditional standards, now maintained with difficulty, beer parties are only for adults.) The justification or circumvention is upon the pattern that is known, and that pattern, despite the intervention of the European, remains intact.

177 231 656 Measures taken to protect national (South African) interests, such as

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cattle-dipping, quarantine regulations, and the reclamation of the reserves, have increased in recent years. Unless some compromise can be reached in regard to the prohibition of cutting down trees, all the Native industries will be stamped out. The change from wattle and daub to sun-dried bricks for constructing huts began before the forestry regulations and is now accelerated, fortunately without causing a major disturbance. Dipping is regarded as a sinister device for keeping down the number of cattle—the hurried driving to and from the dip and the lack of care of wounded cattle or of those in calf do in fact cause deaths, but the absence of milch cows, also attributed to dipping, is the result of overworking the cattle, their poor quality, and inadequate grazing land. Natives believe that dipping exists for the special benefit of dipping officials, who come as poor men, but are rich when they leave. Dipping and quarantine regulations, as well as grazing fees in the Crown Lands, have led to complications in transferring the cattle of the marriage exchanges, driven out customs incipiently accepted from the West, such as cattle posts and cattle racing on the day of the first fruits festival, and introduced the conception of fees for *hu fisa*, the care of cattle by others.

But one of the most unsuspected results is the growth of a reluctance, not merely to slaughter, but also to sell cattle. The evil of this tendency is incalculable, but it is an inevitable result of modern conditions. Sales are difficult, because of the restrictions on movement and the absence of markets; the need to sell or to slaughter is smaller than it was because money is available and agriculture less precarious; the emphasis upon material possessions and the liberation among Christians of cattle from the chain of cattle exchanges tends to imbue them with new values. The tendency is for them to become a standard of wealth rather than a means of subsistence or of facilitating marriage. There is a strong aversion even to slaughter the cattle that used to be killed in marriage negotiations, their place being taken by money and clothes. A strong incentive to slaughter cattle cannot easily be created, since it is not meat, but beer, with which one regales one's neighbours and maintains a reputation for liberality. Among the Lovedu the growing anti-economic conception of cattle has nothing to do with their alleged sacredness.

Western culture has presented itself with a formidable problem. Improvement of stock by way of pedigree bulls, the Lovedu have decisively rejected: they suspect that the Government will claim perhaps the calves, perhaps some other right of interference. They have also for similar reasons refused other aid, such as the introduction of a suitable grass.

Not all the great changes in agriculture have come from the European. The Shangana-Tonga introduced valley cultivation, which was subsequently stimulated by congestion on the hills and by the greater ease of manipulating the plough in the valleys than on the hillsides. With the plough, rejected in its early heavy form, but accepted later when it became lighter, a new set of reactions started. Crops and beer became more abundant, the old forms of co-operative work were transformed, and the effect of the absence in town of the men was minimized. But the plough is destroying the protective verges of fields, sweeping away the borders

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177 241 134 planted with sweet sorghum, and breaking down the contour walls of stone that stopped the rush of water on the slopes. The soil, taxed to its utmost by the mixed crops planted, is gradually becoming exhausted; it is being more easily washed away and the erosion has already silted up the lower stretches of rivers, so that old riverside gardens there have been destroyed. The introduction of donkeys added to the cumulative destructive effect, with which neither the combined forces of agricultural demonstrators and forest rangers, nor the stimulus of agricultural shows and competitions, nor the innate ingenuity of the Native can hope to contend. The fundamental evil is over-population, not over-stocking. In the old days a man hoed near grazing land at his own risk; to-day he must plough where he can.

177 437 A miscellaneous series of reactions may be briefly enumerated. Money subserves some purely economic purposes: it purchases various European articles, such as clothes and cloths, sewing machines and soap, candles, lanterns and paraffin, sieves and enamel dishes, iron objects, cycles, and wagons. But, compared with articles of local manufacture, these introductions are insignificant except among Christians. In the new forms of service and co-operation money also has a purely economic function and threatens the old reciprocities. But it is not always easy to say whether money economy is more rapidly transforming institutions than institutions are transforming money economy: often money becomes incorporated into the pattern of goodwill exchanges. The victory may lie with [182] Western conceptions, but incalculable forces are massing against them, and there is a tendency among the best-educated Natives to revive the past in answer to the challenge of the European.

177 182 The result will be a subtle and unpredictable interpretation. The suspicion that motivates the reaction is both effect and cause: it is the result of a feeling of insecurity, but it leads to protective adjustments in all spheres of culture. A woman may refuse to don a newly bought European blanket until it has been soiled by being worn by some one else susceptible to its dangers or, as they say, until 'the European can no longer be seen in it'. This attitude is evidence both of an old pattern and of profound distrust of the European. Tropical ulcers are sometimes [164] attributed to Nyasaland boys, who are hated for their sexual adventures with Lovedu women; but in fact tropical ulcers have always been there, though the serious lesions appeared for the first time only after the great famine of 1894–6. The psychological determinants of change are resultants of subtle combinations of objective facts and subjective errors.

177 146 182 Change of diet in recent years has contributed to the evil of malnutrition. Its causes are complex. On the one hand, the variety of old crops has been reduced by the plough and congestion destroys the vegetation that is used as relishes and fruits; on the other, the substitutions are inadequate and consist mostly of starches. Physical degeneration weakens the Native as an employee, lassitude adversely affects the incentives and the energy necessary for the tasks of subsistence, and a sense of insecurity fans the flames of suspicion. The difficulties of the dietician and the medical man increase immensely. This is what an intelligent and particularly unbiased young man feels: 'In European hospitals they plan

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to kill us by poisoning and starving us, because they dislike hearing the groaning of a sick man. They will not allow us to go into the sun when we are getting well. The nurses ill-treat us if we do what we think is right. We get no filling food and our only enjoyment, conversation with one another, is repressed by the command to "shut up".' So profound is the suspicion, that one of our good friends died rather than go to hospital, while another, who had sustained a compound fracture, was persuaded to accept our advice to be taken to a European doctor only at the very last moment.

Yet let us not forget that in 1939 a tribal 'Cabinet' was set up and one of its 'ministers' was the guardian of health. His last message to us was that, in accordance with a decision of the 'Cabinet', he 'was watching the diet of the capital and had decided upon strictly prohibiting the running about of fowls'. By old and still persisting custom, it should be mentioned, fowls are not allowed in the capital, because, it is said, they are dirty animals.

Western culture hardly undermines magic and witchcraft: police boys use magic to ward off 'the spears of their enemies', guns are 'doctored' to make them shoot straight and even the inadequacies of European justice are compensated by magic (*hu niclcla*). In this respect the culture has met the challenge, however inappropriately from our point of view. But it has failed to handle successfully the spirit of modern inquiry found among those who have been to school or have been stimulated by their experiences in the towns. Young men do not understand the long process of growing into a culture and ask questions which the old men cannot or will not answer. These young men, who judge by the standards of the little learning which is a dangerous thing, tend to despise what is not made intelligible to them. In their eyes, for instance, the mysteries of the *digɔma* and the *zwiḍajani* are shams, and the fact that no knowledge is imparted in the circumcision 'schools' condemns them as nonsense. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect both for traditional values and old people. But the total effect is minimized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older and begin to become part of and have a stake in the culture. Moreover, inquisitiveness is stamped as the immaturity, almost imbecility, of youth, and the insinuation that the doubts are due to the white man's insidious influence goes far to repress them as unworthy and disloyal.

In this book we have described Lovedu culture as it is to-day, touching but cursorily in the present chapter upon the changes that have occurred or the trends that are apparent in some groups of people. We have seen that the interpenetration in the pre-European period has effected far greater institutional changes than in the European period. Even the incorporation of the cult of spirit possession, which came twenty years after the European, represents a far greater direct evolution than the changes in forms brought about by the Christian religion. The feature of pre-European merging has been incorporation, with modifications, of culture elements and the reciprocal effect upon existing institutions and culture elements. The feature of European penetration, except in material

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177 culture and in the small body of segregated Christians, has been indirect response in attitudes and in the old institutions rather than incorporation of culture elements. The purpose has been to circumvent, if direct resistance was impossible, rather than to accept or embody.

Among the vast majority of the people the long-range pressure of new needs and the indirect response in attitudes has left intact almost all the essential features of the culture. Lovedu religion remains a reality, showing few signs of being modified by Christianity. Ritual is practically untouched—even Christians believe in the magical power of the queen. Magic and witchcraft have become more rather than less elaborate and have been applied to every new introduction from the European. Among the most devout Christians the underlying conceptions of the causation of disease and of therapeutics still hold sway. The essential structure of the political, social and marriage systems is intact, though the reciprocities have weakened. The 'schools', which in 1938 we had thought dead, have been energetically revived, everything in the country during the whole of 1939 being made subservient to the supreme purposes of the *oyali*. The need for dramatizing social values, and for self-expression, which is served by the 'schools', becomes greater as frustration and the lassitude of under-nourishment increase. The bases of subsistence have deteriorated and Natives are not slow to point out that in the sphere of culture most affected by the European the evil effects, despite the gains, are most evident. They blame the plough for the destruction of riverside gardens and for soil-erosion, but they realize that it is impossible to go back to the hoe; and they dislike the new forms of employment, but are unable to see any way of doing without them.

The Lovedu are now entering a new phase, that of greater interference by the European and of increasing community of interest with other tribes. This will ultimately mean a more direct challenge to their institutions and a response in terms partly of their local, and partly of a more comprehensive cultural configuration. The necessity of studying culture contact and culture change comparatively and over large areas will thus be more imperative than ever.

THE LOVEDU OF THE TRANSVAAL

By J. D. *and* E. J. KRIGE

The World View of the Lovedu

THE Lovedu are a South Bantu tribe ruled by a divine queen. They live amid fertile foothills and forest-clad ravines below the Drakensberg escarpment in the north-eastern Transvaal. Their country, of which the present Mujaji Reserve is but a small portion, is situated near the frontiers of the main masses of Sotho-Tswana, Venda, Tsonga, and Nguni peoples; and it was important for the development of Lovedu institutions that the great migratory movements of these major groups skirted round this geographically insulated area.

Before the coming of the Lovedu the population of this area appears to have been predominantly Sotho not unmixed with Karanga, Tsonga, and Nguni elements. Then, about three centuries ago, a small group of Karanga immigrants from the crumbling empire of Monomatapa in Southern Rhodesia arrived and gradually incorporated the local population. From this group the royal house of the Lovedu traces its descent, and it was these people who introduced the complex of royal institutions which eventually became crucial for the world view of the Lovedu tribe. For two centuries, the formative period of their development, they enjoyed peace during which they came to dominate the area and to establish firmly the conception of the divine kingship which they had brought from the north. The situation was complicated at first by the numerical weakness of the nuclear group and the diversity of the incorporated alien groups; and a major challenge was later presented by the influx in the first half of the nineteenth century of great numbers of refugees fleeing from the depredations of Shaka, Moselekatse, and others, and seeking sanctuary in the inviolable realm of Mujaji, the rain queen of the Lovedu. They responded to this challenge by an adaptation of the pattern of the sacred kingship that facilitated incorporation of alien elements, and the result has been a remarkably coherent and well-integrated way of life.

Some Aspects of Lovedu Social Structure

Despite some unique emphases, Lovedu culture is not atypical of the South Bantu. They practise a mixed economy of hoe-culture and cattle-rearing with, however, less reliance upon cattle than Nguni or Tswana. They cultivate a fair variety of crops, most important of which are maize, millet, pumpkins, and groundnuts, and their exploitation of the rich, natural sub-tropical vegetation for purposes of nutrition, economic pursuits, and medico-magical practices is exceedingly thorough. The few cattle that are reared are significant, not for subsistence or as wealth, but for

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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by the institutions and by the reciprocal duties and responsibilities between individuals and groups inherent in the social structure.

Effects of Culture Contact

This picture of the world view of the Lovedu presents living practices and conceptions, not a dead and reconstructed past. Christianity has, indeed, modified some aspects of the culture: Christians are prevented from performing their kinship obligations in the traditional manner; they have accepted European ideas of trade for profit and use institutions such as the work-party for the exploitation of their fellows; but witchcraft, which they are supposed to have rejected, is as a result of increased tensions even more rampant among Christians than pagans. Christians substitute God for the ancestors, but continue to believe that the queen makes rain, albeit by the will of God. They tend to discredit the powers of charms but not of *mpepe*, while 'heat', *makhuma*, and 'shadow' are still real forces, and the underlying conceptions of the causation of disease and misfortune still hold sway. Even these minor modifications have to be viewed in the light of the fact that Christians constitute only about 5 per cent. of the tribe and are relatively isolated.

The influence of Western culture as a whole is more insidious. The knowledge acquired by young men working in the towns and returning to the tribe holds implications as regards the nature of the universe and the destiny and purpose of man which they cannot harmonize with the traditional world view. They tend to despise what the old men cannot or will not make intelligible to them, such as the significance of the *digoma* and the *zwidajani* which appear to them to be shams. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect for their elders and for traditional values and institutions. But the total effect is minimized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older, begin to play a part and to have a stake in the culture. Moreover, they are sensitive to insinuations that their doubts are due to the white man's insidious influences and soon repress them as unworthy and disloyal.

The younger generation tend to shirk unpleasant responsibilities. Thus Jim refused to take over the family office of keeper of the rain-medicine, fearing the risk of sterility which handling of this medicine entails. The absence of many adult men, who are away as migrant labourers, makes the organization of the great ceremonials difficult. Reconciliation and the restitutive sanction are no longer the great forces they used to be, since the closely knit system of reciprocities, everyone's dependence upon day-to-day mutualities and the imperativeness for social life of co-operation, no longer exert the irresistible pressure on the parties to carry out compromises reached in the courts. Aggrieved litigants, reluctant still to invoke European intervention, increasingly resort to magicians who have developed a whole new system of revenge magic to even up matters. The trend is to put their faith in magical retaliation rather than in the sanction of reciprocity.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938, 1961-1962) 1964
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their right to their lands. It is usual for people to 'beg' fields also in areas other than that in which they are living, partly to take advantage of diverse climatic conditions, partly because of land shortage; but their right to these is not as strong as to fields in their home district. Land shortage has not yet reached serious proportions owing to the fact that since the 1920's the tribe has been buying up sparsely populated Crown lands to the north. Grazing and the right to collect wood, thatching grass, wild fruits and plants for economic use are free to all, though herd-boys jealously guard good pastures in their own areas to which they feel they have first right.

Livestock takes the form chiefly of cattle and goats; fowls, still forbidden at the Capital, were introduced by the Tsonga; donkeys and pigs are a European innovation, the former being popular among Christians for use in ploughing and transport, the latter being kept largely by women for exchange purposes. Though of considerable economic importance cattle play little part in the diet of the people, being used mainly for ritual purposes and as bride-price. They move in a chain of marriage exchanges from one family to another, creating and maintaining social links and knitting together in preferred marriage the descendants of brothers and sisters. It was calculated in 1939 that bride-price accounted for 95 per cent of all transfers of cattle in the Lobedu tribe.[1] Cattle coming in as bride-price are not supposed to be used for any other purpose than marriage for, unlike the Zulu who kept large herds, constantly replenished in the old days by raids against neighbours, most Lobedu families do not possess cattle except for short periods of time.

Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

[1] Krige, J. D., 1939, p. 396.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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ance against future want by building up relations of friendship and goodwill with kin and neighbours whom you can call upon for assistance in time of need. Nor does property, as in Western society, command the services of others to any appreciable extent. The core of helpers in a work-party are there primarily because of ties of kinship and neighbourhood; the beer that is served may be enjoyed by any passer-by who wishes to join in. Traditionally, then, property is of value to the Lobedu only in so far as it can be consumed or meets an immediate need on the one hand or, on the other, is used for creating and maintaining social relationships. This is changing now under conditions of culture contact but the change is still largely confined to Christians.

There is not a great deal of exchange and what there is takes the form most frequently of gift exchange[1]. Property in the form of a gift is a tangible sign of a social relationship. A new bride speaks to no one in her new homestead until given a small gift in token of her new social relationship to the giver and the same holds for a newly-initiated boy or girl. Ties with one's maternal kin and with affines are also kept alive by gifts and gift-exchange. It is significant that agnatic ties are the only ones that do not require continuous gift-exchange. Yet even here a service rendered seldom goes unrewarded. Property and human relationships are, then, closely interlinked. That it is not possible always to separate economic and social relationship among the Lobedu is shown by the following examples. Just after the 1895 rinderpest Khidima, a royal relative, went to the queen, who is traditionally responsible for giving succour to orphans and the needy, to ask for money to buy mealies. She gave him some. A few years later he sent a messenger to her to say he 'had a baby daughter'. The queen accepted the gift and when the girl reached puberty presented her with a *theri* goat according to custom. Cattle followed and the girl, Myakwane, was duly 'married' by the queen. This was the beginning of a permanent bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship, for in 1950 the queen sent a messenger to the widow of Myakwane's brother who had used his sister's cattle, to ask for her daughter in marriage. *'Ge leda dikhomo tja ka. Ge nyaga mazuli a de a sthidela*—I am following the tracks of my cattle.

[1] Krige, E. J., 1941.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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administration came the introduction of the Pedi idea that a man has a claim to both the cattle and the children in the case of malicious desertion. Old men in the 1930's called this a white man's law; today people are claiming it as a Lobedu custom. Only two of the oldest men at court were able to tell me in 1962 what had been common knowledge in 1936. The present custom is for the husband on receiving back the bride-price to return some of it (one beast for each child or sometimes two for a girl) for the rearing of the younger children that remain temporarily with their mother. A father's hold over such children is in practice tenuous though the court will always uphold his claims.

The issues in divorce are rarely simple. The simplest case I came across was one in which a man became insane. His wife left with her children to live with her brother who returned the bride-price. Usually, however, there are endless complications and cases continue for months, even years. If, for example, a man chases his wife and children away and the wife wants to return, he may in the end lose both the children and the bride-price despite the proverb quoted above.

The Domestic Group and the Importance of the 'House'

We have discussed the role of property in establishing and maintaining marriage relationships and links between families. Control over material resources also plays an important part in the structure of the polygynous domestic group with its economically independent 'houses' so characteristic of the Lobedu.

As head of the family the husband has full control over all family resources. Yet each wife forms with her children a unit of production and consumption, the independence of which as against other 'houses' has to be respected even by the husband, whose control thus becomes limited the moment he marries a second wife. This is why a Christian woman among the Lobedu never has the economic independence that a woman in a polygynous household has. There are safeguards against the infringement of the principle of the independence of the 'house', as we shall see.

Though women do most of the cultivation, the Lobedu

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its males is counter-balanced by a 'knitting' together of the men with their sisters who have married out and a strengthening of their ties with their maternal kin by means of preferential marriage supported by cattle links. This process is illustrated in Figure 9.

The proportion of mother's brother's daughter marriages in its various forms to the total number of marriages among two generations of members of a large lineage which was analysed in detail (counting the marriage of each woman in a polygynous union as a separate marriage) was 34 per cent, of which 91 per cent were marriages with the mother's uterine brother and its derivations. If married men were to be considered, the proportion would be higher, 63 per cent of the married men having contracted at least one mother's brother's daughter marriage; 80 per cent of these were (or were based on) marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter. This tallies with a random sample of 100 cases taken in 1936 in the royal area (excluding the Capital itself) in which 67 per cent of the married men were found to have married a mother's brother's daughter. But the situation had materially altered by 1962 when a similar sample of 243 cases in the same area showed mother's brother's daughter marriages to have decreased from 67 per cent to 34 per cent. Of these 94 per cent were with the mother's uterine brother or his descendants, which indicates that despite strong forces making for change and increased opportunities for contacts with strangers of the opposite sex which have greatly diminished marriage with distant maternal kin, the values attached to 'knitting' together close relatives are still strong. The most potent forces at work for breaking down preferential marriage are Christianity, which condemns it and school education which by inculcating Western values makes preferential marriage unthinkable to any school child today however short a period he has spent at school.

That men consciously use marriage to keep alive family relationships and that they are deeply concerned about these alliances, can be seen from the case of Modidi (M) in Figure 7.

M's homestead abutted on that of V, whose half-sister K he had married (see Figure 7). When they were both old, M took his granddaughter L, (his son by V's half-sister K having died years before) to his friend V saying, 'I see we are in danger of